A SHORT

HISTORY

OF THE

ISRAELITES.

With an Account of their

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, LAWS, POLITY and RELIGION.

Being an useful INTRODUCTION to the Reading of the OLD TESTAMENT.

Translated from the French of Abbé FLEURY, Author of the *Ecclesiastical History*,

BY

ELLIS FARNEWORTH, M. A.

LONDON,
Printed for J. WHISTON and B. WHITE in *Fleet-street*, and R. BALDWIN in *Pater-noster-Row*.
MDCCLVI.

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MDCCLXX.

TO

The Right Reverend and Honourable

FREDERICK,

Lord Biſhop of *Lichfield* and *Coventry*.

My Lord,

I HUMBLY beg leave to addreſs this little Volume to Your Lordſhip; not as a new thing, becauſe, I do not doubt, You have long ago read it in the language it firſt appeared in. But I fancy there may be ſeveral who have not. For, though freſh editions of it have been conti-

nually called for in France, it has never been tranſlated into our tongue that I know of.

Whilſt we are amuſed with ſo many different views of the conſtitutions of Rome and Athens, as are daily publiſhed, we too much neglect enquiring into the polity of another people, in which we are infinitely more intereſted, and which, perhaps, is leſs underſtood than the others, though ſo often laid before us in our Bible. We are apt to imagine, that the Iſraelites had nothing in common with other nations, becauſe they were under the immediate direction of God. And if this was indeed the caſe, I think it ſhould rather excite our wonder and curioſity, than deter us from ſtudying their hiſtory.—But the quite contrary would evidently appear, if we were better acquainted with them. For then we ſhould find many

many things both in their manners and conſtitution, not only worthy of imitation, but poſſible to be imitated, as in fact they have been, by the beſt men and wiſeſt legiſlators that have lived ſince the time of Moſes.

Father Calmet, and Monſieur Dupin, ſo well known to the world for their very learned and uſeful labours, recommend this piece as an entertaining introduction, and highly ſerviceable towards a right underſtanding of the Old Teſtament. Indeed, the name of Abbé Fleury is ſufficient of itſelf, without any teſtimony, to ſtamp a value upon it. And as the wiſdom of our Governors not only permits, but encourages us to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, the better they are underſtood, the more plainly we ſhall diſcern the ſolid baſis upon which Chriſtianity is founded.

If this ſmall performance ſhall be thought, in any degree, to anſwer that end, I am perſuaded it will not meet with an unfavourable reception from Your LORDSHIP, and am, with the higheſt regard,

MY LORD,

Your Lordſhip's

moſt Dutiful, and

moſt Obedient

Humble Servant,

ELLIS FARNEWORTH.

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A SHORT

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

The DESIGN *of this* TREATISE.

THE people, whom God chose to preserve the true religion till the promulgation of the gospel, are an excellent model of that way of living, which is most conformable to nature. We see in their customs the most rational method of subsisting, employing one's self, and living in society: and from thence may learn, not only

leſſons of morality, but rules for our conduct, both in publick and private life.

Yet theſe cuſtoms are ſo different from our own, that at firſt ſight they offend us. We ſee not, among the Iſraelites, thoſe titles of nobility, that multitude of employments, or diverſity of conditions, which are to be found amongſt us. They are only huſbandmen and ſhepherds, all working with their own hands, all married, and looking upon a great number of children as the moſt valuable bleſſing. The diſtinction of meats, of clean and unclean animals, with their frequent purifications, ſeem to us, as ſo many troubleſome ceremonies: their bloody ſacrifices quite diſguſt us. We obſerve moreover, that theſe people were prone to idolatry, and, for that reaſon, are often reproached in Scripture for their perverſeneſs and hardneſs of heart, and by the fathers of the church, for being dull and carnally minded. All this, joined to a general prejudice, that what is moſt antient is always moſt imperfect, eaſily influences us to believe, that theſe men were brutiſh and ignorant, and their cuſtoms more worthy of contempt than admiration.

And this is one reaſon, why the holy Scriptures, eſpecially thoſe of the Old Teſta-

ment,

ment, are ſo much neglected, or read to ſo little purpoſe. Several well-meaning people, who have not quite got the better of ſuch prejudices, are diſcouraged by the outward appearance of theſe ſtrange cuſtoms: and, either impute the whole, without diſtinction, to the imperfection of the old law; or imagine, that ſome myſteries, beyond their comprehenſion, are concealed under this viſible ſhew: others, for want of faith, or goodneſs of heart, are tempted, upon ſuch pretences, to deſpiſe the Scripture itſelf, as full of mean and trivial things; or draw wrong concluſions from it to countenance their own vices.

But, upon comparing the manners of the Iſraelites with thoſe of the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and other people of former ages, that we hold in the higheſt veneration, theſe prejudices ſoon vaniſh. We obſerve a noble ſimplicity in them, much preferable to all refinements: that the Iſraelites had every thing that was valuable in the cuſtoms of their contemporaries, without many of their defects, and a great advantage over them in underſtanding what ought to be our chief aim in this life, from their knowledge of the true religion, which is the foundation of morality.

We muſt learn then to diſtinguiſh what is only offenſive to us in their cuſtoms, from what is really blame worthy: what we do not like, upon account of the diſtance of times and places, though it be in itſelf indifferent, from that which, being good in itſelf, diſpleaſes us for no other reaſon, than becauſe we are corrupt in our manners. For moſt of the difference betwixt us and them, does not proceed from our being more enlightened by Chriſtianity, but from our being leſs guided by reaſon. The Chriſtian religion did not introduce this great inequality of conditions, this diſdain of labour, this eagerneſs for diverſions, this authority of women and young people, this averſion to a ſimple and frugal life, which make us differ ſo much from the antients. It would have been much eaſier to have made good Chriſtians of theſe ſhepherds and plowmen, which we ſee in their hiſtory, than of our courtiers, lawyers, or farmers of the revenue, and many others that ſpend their lives in an idle and diſcontented poverty. And this will appear plainer by the deſcription I ſhall draw of the * cuſtoms of the Chriſtians, after I have given that of the Iſraelites.

* He did publiſh a book with this title, *Les Mœurs des Chretiens*, which was tranſlated into Engliſh, and

Now,

Now, I do not pretend here to make a panegyrick; but to give a very plain account, like that of travellers, who have ſeen far diſtant countries: I ſhall deſcribe what is good, bad, or indifferent, juſt as it is, and only deſire the reader to diveſt himſelf of all prejudice, that he may judge of theſe cuſtoms by good ſenſe and right reaſon alone: to diſcard the ideas that are peculiar to our own age and country, and conſider the Iſraelites in the circumſtances of time and place wherein they lived; to compare them with their neareſt neighbours, and by that means to enter into their ſpirit and maxims.

For one muſt be an entire ſtranger to hiſtory, not to ſee the great difference which diſtance of time and place occaſions in people's manners. We inhabit the ſame country, which the Gauls, and afterwards the Romans, dwelt in: and yet, how much do we vary from both in their way of living; nay even from that of the French, who lived ſeven or eight hundred years ago? And at preſent, what likeneſs is there between our cuſtoms, and thoſe of the Turks, Indians, and Chi-

called, *An Hiſtorical Account of the Manners and Behaviour of the Chriſtians*, printed in octavo at London, in the year 1698.

neſe?

neſe? If then we conſider theſe two ſorts of diſtance together, we ſhall be ſo far from being aſtoniſhed, that they, who lived in Paleſtine three thouſand years ago, had cuſtoms different from ours, that we ſhall rather wonder if we find any thing in them alike.

We muſt not imagine however, that theſe changes are regular, and always come on in the ſame ſpace of time. Countries that are very near each other, often differ widely in their religion and politicks; as, at this day, Spain and Africa, which, under the Roman empire, had the ſame cuſtoms. On the contrary, there is now a great reſemblance betwixt thoſe of Spain and Germany, though there was then none. The ſame holds good in reſpect to the difference of times. They that are not acquainted with hiſtory, having heard it ſaid, that the people of former ages were more *ſimple* than we, ſuppoſe the world is always growing more polite; and that the farther any one looks back into antiquity, the more ſtupid and ignorant he will find mankind to have been.

But it is not really ſo in countries that have been inhabited ſucceſſively by different people: the revolutions that have happened there, have always, from time to time, introduced

ced miſery and ignorance, after proſperity and good manners. So, Italy is now in a much better condition than it was eight hundred years ago. But eight hundred years before that, under the firſt Cæſars, it was happier, and in a more proſperous ſtate than it is at preſent. It is true, if we go back eight hundred years more, near the time that Rome was founded, the ſame Italy will appear much poorer and leſs poliſhed, though at that time very populous: and ſtill the further we aſcend, it will ſeem more wretched and uncultivated. Nations have their periods of duration, like particular men. The moſt flouriſhing ſtate of the Greeks was under Alexander; of the Romans, under Auguſtus; and of the Iſraelites under Solomon.

We ought therefore to diſtinguiſh in every people, their beginning, their greateſt proſperity, and their declenſion. In this manner I ſhall conſider the Iſraelites, during all that ſpace of time that they were a people, from the calling of Abraham, to the laſt deſtruction of Jeruſalem. It contains more than two thouſand years, which I will divide into three periods, according to the three different ſtates of this people. The firſt, of the Patriarchs; the ſecond, of the Iſraelites, from their going

out of Egypt to the Babyloniſh captivity; and the third, of the Jews after they returned from captivity, to the promulgation of the goſpel.

CHAP. II.

Of the Patriarchs. Their nobility.

THE Patriarchs lived after a noble manner, in perfect freedom and great plenty, notwithſtanding their way of living was plain and laborious. Abraham knew the whole ſucceſſion of his anceſtors, and no way leſſened his nobility, ſince he married into his own family. He took care to provide a wife of the ſame race for his ſon, in whom were fulfilled all the benedictions that God had promiſed him: and Iſaac made Jacob obſerve the ſame law.

The long lives of the fathers gave them an opportunity of educating their children well, and of making them ſerious and conſiderate betimes. Abraham lived more than a hundred years with Shem, and might learn from him the ſtate of the world before the deluge. He never left his father Terah, and was at leaſt ſeventy years old when he loſt him

him. Iſaac was ſeventy-five when Abraham died, and never went from him all that time, that we know of. It is the ſame with reſpect to the other Patriarchs. Living ſo long with their fathers, they had the benefit of their experience and inventions. They proſecuted their deſigns, adhered firmly to their maxims, and became conſtant and uniform in their conduct. For it was a difficult matter to change what had been ſettled by men who were ſtill alive; eſpecially as the old men kept up their authority, not only over the youth, but the elders that were not ſo old as themſelves.

The remembrance of things paſt might be eaſily preſerved by the bare relation of old men, who naturally love to tell ſtories, and had ſo much leiſure for it. By this means they had no great uſe for writing; and it is certain we find no mention of it before Moſes. However difficult it may ſeem to conceive that ſo many calculations as he recites ſhould be preſerved in the memory of men, as the age of all the Patriarchs, the exact dates of the beginning and end of the Flood, the dimenſions of the ark, &c. yet there is no neceſſity for recurring to miracle and revela-

Gen. v.
Gen. vii. 11, and viii. 13.
Gen. vi. 15.

tion.

tion: For it is probable that writing was found out before the deluge; as we are ſure
Gen. iv. 2. muſical inſtruments were, though not ſo neceſſary. But though Moſes might have learned, in the common way, moſt of the facts which he has written, I believe nevertheleſs, that he was influenced by the holy ſpirit to record theſe facts, rather than others, and expreſs them in terms moſt proper for the purpoſe.

Beſides, the Patriarchs took care to preſerve the memory of conſiderable events by ſetting up altars and pillars and other laſting
Gen. xii. 7, 13, 18. monuments. Thus, Abraham erected altars in divers places where God had appeared to
Gen. xxvi. 18. him. Jacob conſecrated the ſtone, which ſerved him for a pillow while he had the myſterious dream of the ladder: and the
Gen. xxxi. 48. heap of ſtones, which was witneſs to his covenant with Laban, he called Galeed. Of this kind was the ſepulchre of Rachel, the well
Gen. xxvi. 33. called Beerſheba, and all the other wells mentioned in the hiſtory of Iſaac. Some-
Pauſan. Dion. Hal. lib. iii. times they gave new names to places. The Greeks and Romans relate the ſame of their heroes, the oldeſt of whom lived near the times of the Patriarchs. Greece was full of their monuments: Æneas, to mention no others,

others, left ſome in every place that he paſſed through in Greece, Sicily, and Italy.

The very names of the Patriarchs were beſides a ſort of more ſimple and familiar monuments. They ſignified ſome remarkable circumſtance of their birth, or particular favour received from God. So they were in effect a ſhort hiſtory. For they took care to explain the reaſon of theſe names to their children, and it was hardly poſſible to pronounce them without refreſhing the memory of it. This care for poſterity and providence for the future was an argument of true generoſity and greatneſs of mind.

The Patriarchs enjoyed perfect freedom, and their family was a little ſtate, of which the father was, in a manner, king. For what did Abraham want of the power of ſovereigns, but their vain titles and inconvenient ceremonies? he was ſubject to nobody, kings concluded alliances with him: he made war and peace when he pleaſed. Princes ſought the alliance of Iſaac: Iſhmael, Jacob, and Eſau were likewiſe independent. We muſt not then ſuffer ourſelves to be miſled by names, nor think Abraham inferior to Amraphel or Abimelech, becauſe the Scripture does not call him king as well as them. Gen. xxvi. 26. 28.

He

Gen. xiv. 14. He was certainly equal to one of thoſe four kings, whom he defeated with his domeſtick forces and the aſſiſtance of his three allies. The greateſt difference was that he did not ſhut himſelf up within walls as they did, and that his whole family followed him to any place whither he had a mind to move his tents. —All authentick hiſtory teſtifies that kingdoms were very ſmall, even in the eaſt, at that time of day; and we find them ſo in other countries a great while after.

CHAP. III.

Their Riches.

THE riches of the Patriarchs conſiſted chiefly in cattle. Abraham muſt have had a vaſt ſtock when he was obliged to part from his nephew Lot, becauſe *the land was* Gen. xiii. 6. *not able to bear them* together. Jacob had a great number when he came back from Meſopotamia; ſince the preſent that he made his brother Eſau was five hundred and eighty head of cattle of different ſorts. From which Gen. xxxii. 13. we may likewiſe learn what ſort of beaſts they bred, viz. goats, ſheep, camels, horn'd cattle and aſſes. There were no horſes or ſwine among

among them. Such plenty of beaſts made them ſet ſo great a value upon wells and ciſterns in a country where there was no river but Jordan, and rain very ſeldom.

They had ſlaves too: and Abraham muſt have had abundance of them, ſince he armed three hundred and eighteen men of thoſe that were born in his houſe and trained up by him. In proportion, he muſt have had plenty of children, old men, women, and ſlaves that were bought with money. When he returned from Egypt, it is ſaid he was rich in gold and ſilver. The bracelets and earings, which his ſervant Eliezer made a preſent of to Rebecca from his maſter, weighed ſix ounces of gold; and the purchaſe of his burying place ſhews that money was in uſe at that time. We ſee likewiſe by Eſau's cloaths, which Jacob wore to obtain his father's bleſſing, that perfumes and coſtly raiments were made uſe of.

Gen. xiv. 14.

Gen. xiii. 2.

Gen. xxiv. 22.

Gen. xxiii. 16.

Gen. xxvii. 27.

With all their riches they were very laborious, always in the field, lying under tents, ſhifting their abode according to the convenience of paſture, and conſequently often taken up with encamping and decamping, and frequently upon the march: for they could make but ſhort days journeys with ſo numerous

rous an attendance. Not but they might have built towns as well as their country men: but they choſe this way of living. It is without doubt the moſt ancient, ſince it is eaſier to ſet up tents, than to build houſes; and has always been reckon'd the moſt perfect, as engaging men leſs to this world. So too it beſt repreſented the condition of the Patri-

Heb. xi. 9. archs, who lived here only as travellers waiting for the promiſes of God, which were not to be accompliſhed till after their death.

Gen. iv. 17. x. 10. The firſt cities that are mentioned were built by wicked men; Cain and Nimrod were the firſt that erected walls and fortifications to ſecure themſelves from the puniſhment due to their crimes, and to give them an opportunity of committing freſh ones with impunity. Good men lived in the open air, without being afraid of any thing.

The chief employment of the Patriarchs was the care of their cattle: Their whole

Gen. xlvii. 3. hiſtory ſhews it, and the plain account which the ſons of Jacob gave of themſelves to the king of Egypt. Though huſbandry be very antient, the paſtoral life is the more perfect. The firſt was the lot of Cain, the other of Abel. It has ſomething in it more ſimple and noble, it is leſs laborious, attaches one leſs to the world,

world, and yet more profitable. Old Cato preferred a ſtock of cattle, though but a moderate one, to Tillage, which yet he thought better than any other way of improving his fortune. De re ruſtic. in init.

The juſt reprimand, which Jacob gave Laban, ſhews that the Patriarchs took true pains at their work, and did not ſpare themſelves at all. *I have ſerved thee twenty years*, ſays he, *in the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night, and my ſleep departed from mine eyes.* One may judge of the men's laborious way of living by that of the young women. Rebecca came a good way off to draw water, and carried it upon her ſhoulders; and Rachel her ſelf kept her fathers flock: neither their nobility nor beauty made them ſo delicate as to ſcruple it. This primeval ſimplicity was long retained amongſt the Greeks, whoſe good breeding we yet admire with ſo much reaſon. Homer affords us examples of it throughout his works, and paſtorals have no other foundation. It is certain that in Syria, Greece, and Sicily there were perſons of condition who made it their ſole occupation to breed cattle for more than one thouſand five hundred years after the Patriarchs, and who, in the great leiſure that ſort Gen. xxxi. 40. Gen. xxiv. 15. Gen. xxix. 9.

of

of life afforded, and the good humour thoſe delightful countries inſpired them with, compoſed ſeveral little pieces of poetry, ſtill extant, of inimitable beauty and ſimplicity.

CHAP. IV.

Their Frugality.

THE Patriarchs were not at all nice in their eating or other neceſſaries of life: one may judge of their common food by the pottage of lentiles that Jacob had prepared, which tempted Eſau to ſell his Birthright. But we have an inſtance of a ſplendid entertainment in that which Abraham made for the three angels. He ſet a calf before them, new bread, but baked upon the hearth, butter and milk. It ſeems they had ſome ſort of *made diſhes*, by that which Rebecca cooked for Iſaac: but his great age may excuſe this delicacy. This diſh was made of two kids. Abraham dreſſed a whole calf for the angels, and three meaſures of meal made into bread, which comes to more than two of our buſhels and near fifty ſix pounds of our weight. From whence we may conclude they were great eaters, uſed much exerciſe, and were perhaps

Gen. xxv. 29.

Gen. xviii. 6.

Gen. xxvii. 9.

perhaps of a larger ſtature as well as longer lives than we. The Greeks ſeem to think their heroes were bigger men, and Homer makes them great eaters. When Eumæus entertained Ulyſſes, he dreſſed a hog of five years old for five perſons. Odyſſ. 14.

Homer's heroes wait upon themſelves in the common occaſions of life: and we ſee the Patriarchs do the ſame. Abraham, who had ſo many ſervants, and was near a hundred years old, brings the water himſelf to waſh the feet of his divine gueſts, bids his wife make the bread quickly, goes himſelf to chuſe the meat, and comes again to ſerve them ſtanding. I will allow that he was animated upon this occaſion with a deſire of ſhewing hoſpitality: but all the reſt of their lives is of a piece with it. Their ſervants were to aſſiſt them, but not ſo as to exempt them from working themſelves. In fact, who could have obliged Jacob, when he went into Meſopotamia, to travel a journey of more than two hundred leagues (for it was at leaſt ſo far from Beerſheba to Haran) alone, and on foot with a ſtaff in his hand? what, I ſay, could oblige him to it but his own commendable plaineſs and love of toil? Thus he reſts where night overtakes him, and Gen. xviii. 4. Gen. xxxii. 10.

lays a ſtone under his head inſtead of a pillow. Thus, though he was ſo tenderly fond of Joſeph, he does not ſcruple ſending him alone from Hebron to ſeek his brethren at Sichem, which was a long day's journey; and when Joſeph does not find them there, he goes on to Dothan, more than a day's journey further, and all this when he was but ſixteen years old.

Gen. xxxvii. 15.

It was this plain and laborious way of life, no doubt, that made them attain to ſuch a great old age, and die ſo calmly. Both Abraham and Iſaac lived near two hundred years. The other Patriarchs, whoſe age is come to our knowledge, exceeded a hundred at leaſt, and we do not hear that they were ever ſick during ſo long a life. *He gave up the ghoſt, and died in a good old age, full of days*; is the manner in which the Scripture deſcribes their death. The firſt time we read of phyſicians is, when it is ſaid that Joſeph commanded his domeſticks to embalm the body of his father. It was in Egypt; and many have aſcribed the invention of phyſick to the Egyptians.

Gen. xxv. 8.

Gen. l. 2

Aug. de Civit. Dei, xvi. 25.

The moderation of the Patriarchs with regard to wives, is no leſs to be admired, when we conſider they were allowed to have

ſeveral,

ſeveral, and their deſire of a numerous poſterity. Abraham, whom God had promiſed to make the father of an innumerable people, though he had a barren wife, was ſo far from thinking of taking another, that he had made a reſolution of leaving his ſubſtance to his head ſervant. He did not take a ſecond till he was eighty ſix years old, and his own wife gave her to him. We muſt not ſay that he was ſtill young with reſpect to his life, which was a hundred ſeventy five years long: becauſe, thirteen years after, he and Sarah, who was ten years younger, are called old, and laughed at it as an incredible thing when God promiſed them a ſon. As old as Abraham was, and as deſirous, as we may ſuppoſe him, to ſee the children of Iſaac, he did not marry him till he was forty years old: and though Rebecca had no child for twenty years, and never but two and thoſe at one birth, Iſaac had no other wife.

Gen. xv. 2.

Gen. xvi. 10.

Gen. xviii. 11.

Gen. xxv. 20.

Ibid. 26.

It is true, Jaçob had two wives at the ſame time, and as many concubines: but it is fit we ſhould conſider the reaſon of it. He ſtaid till he was ſeventy ſeven with his father, waiting for the important bleſſing which he had a right to, by the reſignation of his brother: at that age he thought of marrying,

Gen. xxix. 28. and aſked for Rachel, but did not obtain her till he had ſerved ſeven years. At laſt then he married at eighty four. They gave him Leah againſt his will, and he kept her, that ſhe might not be diſgraced. But as he might have more wives than one, or marry two ſiſters, without the breach of any law then exiſting, he took her too that he had firſt engaged to wed. When ſhe found herſelf barren, ſhe gave her huſband a handmaid to have children by her. This was a ſort of adoption practiſed at that time, and her ſiſter did the ſame, that the family might be increaſed. From all which St. Auguſtin draws this concluſion: *We do not read that Jacob deſired any more than one wife, or made uſe of more, without ſtrictly obſerving the laws of conjugal chaſtity.* We muſt not imagine he had other wives before: for why ſhould the laſt only be mentioned?

Gen. xxix. 30.

De civitate Dei, xviii. 38.

And yet I do not undertake to juſtify all the patriarchs in this point. The ſtory of Judah and his ſons affords but too many examples of the contrary. I would only ſhew that we cannot, with juſtice, accuſe thoſe of incontinence whom the Scripture reckons holy. For with regard to the reſt of mankind they were from that time very much

Gen. xxxviii.

much corrupted. Such then, in general, was the firſt ſtate of God's people. An entire freedom, without any government, but that of a father, who was an abſolute monarch in his own family. A life very natural and eaſy, through a great abundance of neceſſaries and an utter contempt of ſuperfluities; through an honeſt labour accompanied with care and frugality, without anxiety or ambition. Let us now proceed to the ſecond period: which is, that of the Iſraelites from their coming out of Egypt to the Babyloniſh captivity. It laſted more than nine hundred years, and moſt of the ſacred writings relate to it.

PART II.

CHAP. I.

The ISRAELITES. *Their* NOBILITY.

THOUGH the people were already very numerous, they were ſtill called *the children of Iſrael*, as if they had been but one family: In the ſame manner as they ſaid *the children of Edom*, *the children of Moab*, &c. Indeed all theſe people were ſtill diſtinct: each knew their own origin, and took a pride in preſerving the name of their author. Thence probably it comes that the name of *children* ſignified with the antients, a nation, or certain ſort of people. Homer often ſays, *the children of the Greeks*, and *the children of the Trojans*. The Greeks uſed to ſay, *the children of the phyſicians, and grammarians*. With the Hebrews, *the children of the eaſt*, are the eaſtern people; *the children of Belial*, the wicked; *the children of men*, or *Adam*, mankind: and in the goſpel we often ſee, *the children of this world, of darkneſs, and of light*, and alſo, *the children of the bridegroom*, for thoſe that go along with him to his wedding.

The

The Iſraelites were divided into twelve tribes. There was the ſame number of the Iſhmaelites, and as many of the Perſians. The people of Athens were at firſt compoſed of four tribes, afterwards divided into ten, to which they gave the names of ten heroes, who for this reaſon were called Eponymi, and whoſe ſtatues were ſet up in the publick Exchange. The Roman people were alſo diſtributed into three or four tribes, which increaſed to thirty five. The names of them are ſtill upon record. But theſe Athenian and Roman tribes were made up of different families collected together to keep order in their aſſemblies and elections. Whereas thoſe of the Iſraelites were naturally diſtinct, and were only twelve large families deſcended from twelve brothers.

Gen. xxv. 16. Xenoph. Cyrop. Demoſth. in Timocr. in Leptin. & ibi Ulpian.

They were very exact in keeping their genealogies, and knew all the ſucceſſion of their anceſtors, as high as the patriarch of their tribe, from whom it is eaſy going back to the firſt man. Thus they were really brethren, that is to ſay, kinſmen according to the eaſtern language, and of genuine nobility, if ever there was ſuch a thing in the world.

They had preſerved the purity of their families, by taking care, as their fathers did, not to marry with the nations deſcended from Canaan that were under a curſe. For we do not find that the Patriarchs avoided matches with any other people, or that they were expreſsly forbidden by the law to marry with them. Their families were fixed and tied down by the ſame law to certain lands on which they were obliged to live, during the ſpace of the nine hundred years I have mentioned. Now, methinks, we ſhould eſteem that family very noble indeed, that could ſhew as long a ſucceſſion of generations, without any diſgraceful weddings in it, or change of manſion. Few noblemen in Europe can prove ſo much.

Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.

We are deceived by not ſeeing titles among the Iſraelites like thoſe of our nobility. Every one was called plainly by his own name: but their names ſignified great things, as thoſe of the Patriarchs. The name of God was part of moſt: which was in a manner a ſhort prayer. Elias and Joel are made up of two of God's names joined in a different way: Jehoſaphat and Sephatiah ſignify the *judgment of God:* Jehozadak and Zedekiah, *his juſtice:*

juſtice: Johanan or John the ſon of Hananiah, *his mercy:* Nathanael, Elnathan, Jonathan, and Nethaniah, all four ſignify, *God given*, or, *the gift of God.* Sometimes the name of God was underſtood, as in Nathan, David, Obed, Uzzah, Ezra or Eſdras: as is plain by Eliezer, Uzziel, and Obadiah, where it is expreſſed. Some of their names were myſterious and prophetical, as that of Joſhua or Jeſus, and thoſe which Hoſea and Iſaiah gave their children by the order of God. Other names ſhewed the piety of their fathers, and we may ſee inſtances of it in the names of David's brethren and children.

Hoſ. i. 4. Iſaiah viii. 3.

1 Chron. ii. 13. & iii. 1.

Such are the names which appear ſo barbarous to us for want of underſtanding the Hebrew tongue. Are they not full as ſignificant as thoſe of caſtles and towns which our nobility aſſume? The Greek names, whoſe ſound we are ſo fond of, are of the ſame import. Many are compoſed of the names of their Gods: as Diodorus, Diogenes, Hermodorus, Hephæſtion, Athenais, Artemiſia. But ſeveral are derived from their love of exerciſe, particularly of riding, as Philip, Damaſippus, or Hippodamas, Hegeſippus, Hippomedon, *&c.*

They

They often added the father's name, either for diſtinction or reſpect's ſake, to ſhew that the father was a man of renown: perhaps Solomon had this cuſtom in his eye, when he ſaid, *the glory of children are their fathers.* Thus we ſee in Homer, that the Greeks took the paternal name for a mark of honour. Sometimes the mother's name was given for the ſurname; as when the father had many wives, or when the mother was of the better family. So Joab and his brethren are always called *the ſons of Zeruiah*, who was David's ſiſter. If the name of the father was not diſtinction enough, they added the grandfather's, as *Gedaliah the ſon of Ahikam, the ſon of Shaphan.* And this is the reaſon of ſo many names that appear tireſome to us: for they went ſometimes as high as the great grandfather, or higher. Sometimes a ſurname was taken from the head of a particular branch, from a town, a country, or a nation, if they were originally ſtrangers; as *Uriah the Hittite, Araunah the Jebuſite.*

Prov. xvii. 6.

Iliad. x. ℣ 68.

1 Chron. ii. 16.

Jerem. xxxix. 14.

The Greeks had no ſurnames but what they took from their father or country. The Romans had family names, to which they only added the diſtinction of ſome great office

office or remarkable victory: but in deeds, they always ſet down the father's name. Many of the European nations ſtill retain the ſame cuſtom; and moſt of our ſurnames come from the proper names of the fathers, which have remained with their children. As to the titles of *lordſhips*, they are not above ſeven hundred years old, no more than the lordſhips themſelves. We muſt not be ſurprized to ſee in Scripture, *David the ſon of Jeſſe*, and *Solomon the ſon of David*, any more than Alexander the ſon of Philip, and Ptolemy the ſon of Lagus in Greek authors.

The principal diſtinction that birth occaſioned amongſt the Iſraelites, was that of the Levites and prieſts. The whole tribe of Levi was dedicated to God, and had no inheritance but the tenths and the firſt fruits, which it received from the other tribes. Of all the Levites, the deſcendants of Aaron only were prieſts: the reſt were employed in the other functions of religion: in ſinging pſalms, taking care of the tabernacle or temple, and inſtructing the people. Two of the other tribes were ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed. That of Judah was always the moſt illuſtrious and the moſt numerous; of which, according to Jacob's prophecy, their kings and the Meſſiah himſelf

Gen. xlix. 10. himſelf were to come. That of Ephraim held the ſecond rank on account of Joſeph. Yet the eldeſt branches and the heads of each family were moſt eſteemed in every tribe: and this made Saul ſay, ſurprized with the 1 Sam. ix. 21. reſpect that Samuel paid him, *Am not I of the ſmalleſt of the tribes of Iſrael, and my family the leaſt of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?*

Age too made a great diſtinction; and the name of *old man* in Scripture generally denotes dignity. Indeed there was nothing but age and experience, that could diſtinguiſh men equally noble, and of the ſame education and employments, and almoſt equally rich.

CHAP. II.

Their employments. Agriculture.

WE do not find any diſtinct profeſſions amongſt the Iſraelites. From the eldeſt of the tribe of Judah to the youngeſt of that of Benjamin, they were all huſbandmen and ſhepherds, driving their Judg. xix. 16. ploughs and watching their flocks themſelves. The old man of Gibeah, that lodged the Levite, whoſe wife was abuſed, was coming

coming back at night from his work, when he invited him to ſojourn with him. Gideon himſelf was threſhing his corn when the Angel told him he ſhould deliver his people. Ruth got into the good graces of Boaz by gleaning at his harveſt. Saul, tho' a king, was driving oxen, when he received the news of the danger Jabeſh Gilead was in. Every body knows that David was keeping ſheep, when Samuel ſent to look for him to anoint him king; and he returned to his flock after he had been called to play upon the harp before Saul. After he was king, his ſons made a great feaſt at the ſhearing of their ſheep. Eliſha was called to be a prophet, as he drove one of his father's twelve ploughs. The child that he brought to life again, was with his father at the harveſt, when it fell ſick. And Judith's huſband, tho' very rich, got the illneſs of which he died on the like occaſion. The Scripture abounds with ſuch examples.

Judg. vi. 11. 1 Sam. xi. 5. 1 Sam. xvi. 11. Ibid. xvii. 15. 2 Sam. xiii. 23. 1 Kings, xix. 19. 2 Kings, iv. 18. Judith, viii. 3.

This, without doubt, is what moſt offends thoſe that are not acquainted with antiquity, and have no opinion of any cuſtoms but their own. When one ſpeaks of ploughmen and ſhepherds, they figure to themſelves a parcel of clowniſh boors, that lead a ſlaviſh, miſerable life,

life, in poverty and contempt, without heart, without ſenſe or education. They dont conſider that what makes our country people commonly ſo wretched, is their being ſlaves to all the reſt of mankind: ſince they work not only for their own maintenance, but to furniſh neceſſaries for all thoſe that live in a better manner. For it is the countryman that provides for the citizens, the officers of the courts of judicature and treaſury, gentlemen, and eccleſiaſticks: and whatever ways we make uſe of to turn money into proviſions, or proviſions into money, all will end in the fruits of the earth, and thoſe animals that are ſupported by them. Yet when we compare all theſe different conditions together, we generally place thoſe that work in the country, in the laſt rank: and moſt people ſet a greater value upon fat, idle citizens, that are weak and lazy and good for nothing, becauſe, being richer, they live more luxurioufly and at their eaſe.

But if we imagine a country, where the difference of conditions is not ſo great, where to live genteely, is not to live without doing any thing at all: but carefully to preſerve ones liberty, which conſiſts in being ſubject to nothing, but the laws and publick authority; ſubſiſting upon ones own ſtock, without depending upon

upon any body, and being content with a little, rather than do a mean thing to grow rich: a country where idleneſs, effeminacy, and ignorance of what is neceſſary for the ſupport of life were diſcountenanced: and where pleaſure was in leſs eſteem than health and ſtrength: in ſuch a country it would be more creditable to plough or keep a flock than to follow diverſions and idle away all ones time. Now there is no neceſſity of having any recourſe to Plato's commonwealth to find men of this condition; for ſo lived the greateſt part of mankind near four thouſand years.

To begin with what we are beſt acquainted with. Of this ſort were the maxims of the Greeks and Romans. We ſee every where, in Homer, kings and princes living upon the fruits of their lands and their flocks, and working with their own hands. Heſiod has wrote a poem on purpoſe to recommend huſbandry as the only creditable means of ſubſiſting and improving ones fortune; and finds fault with his brother, to whom he addreſſes it, for living at other people's expence by pleading cauſes and following affairs of that kind. He reckons this employment, which is the ſole occupation of ſo many amongſt us, no better than idleneſs.

We ſee by Xenophon's oeconomics that the Greeks had no way leſſened their opinion of huſbandry, when they were at the higheſt pitch of politeneſs.

We muſt not therefore impute the fondneſs of the Romans for huſbandy to ſtupidity and want of letters: it is rather a ſign of their good ſenſe. As all men are born with limbs and bodies fit for labour, they thought every one ought to make uſe of them, and that they could not do it to better purpoſe than in making the earth afford them a certain maintenance and innocent plenty. It was not, however, covetouſneſs that recommended it to them: ſince the ſame Romans deſpiſed gold and the preſents of ſtrangers. Nor was it want of courage and bravery: ſince at that very time they ſubdued all Italy, and raiſed thoſe powerful armies with which they afterwards conquered the whole world. On the contrary, the painful and frugal life they led in the country was the chief reaſon of their great ſtrength, making their bodies robuſt and inured to labour, and accuſtoming them to ſevere diſcipline. Whoever is acquainted with the life of Cato the cenſor, cannot ſuſpect him of a low way of thinking or meaneſs of ſpirit. Yet that great man, who had

gone

gone through all the offices in the commonwealth when it flouriſhed moſt, who had governed provinces and commanded armies: that great orator, lawyer, and politician did not think it beneath him to write of the various ways of managing lands and vines, the method of building ſtables for different ſorts of beaſts, and a preſs for wine or oil: and all this in the moſt circumſtantial manner: ſo that, we ſee, he underſtood it perfectly well, and did not write out of oſtentation or vain-glory, but for the benefit of mankind.

Let us then frankly own that our contempt of huſbandry is not founded upon any ſolid reaſon: ſince this occupation is no way inconſiſtent with courage, or any other virtue that is neceſſary either in peace or war, or even with true politeneſs. Whence then does it proceed? I will endeavour to ſhew the real cauſe. It comes only from uſe, and the old cuſtoms of our own country. The Franks, and other people of Germany lived in countries that were covered with foreſts: they had neither corn nor wine, nor any good fruits. So that they were obliged to live by hunting, as the ſavages ſtill do in the cold countries of America. After they had croſſed the Rhine,

and ſettled on better lands, they were ready enough to take the advantages that reſult from agriculture, arts, and trade: but would not apply *themſelves* to any of them. They left this occupation to the Romans whom they had ſubdued, and continued in their antient ignorance, which time ſeemed to have made venerable; and entailed ſuch an idea of nobility upon it, as we have ſtill much ado to get the better of.

But, in the ſame degree that they leſſened the eſteem for agriculture, they brought hunting into credit, of which the antients made but little account. They held it in the higheſt repute, and advanced it to very great perfection, ſparing neither pains nor expence. This has been generally the employment of the nobility. Yet, to conſider things in a true light, the labour ſpent in tilling the ground, and rearing tame creatures, anſwers at leaſt as well, as that which only aims at catching wild beaſts, often at the expence of tillage. The moderate pains of one that has the care of a great number of cattle and poultry, is, ſurely, as eligible as the violent and unequal exerciſe of a hunter; and oxen and ſheep are at leaſt as uſeful for our ſupport as dogs and horſes. It may well therefore be doubted,

whether our cuſtoms in this point, are as agreeable to reaſon, as thoſe of the antients.

Beſides, the Greeks and Romans were not the only people that eſteemed agriculture as the Hebrews did: the Carthaginians, who were originally Phœnicians, ſtudied it much, as appears by the twenty eight books which Mago wrote upon that ſubject. The Egyptians had ſuch a reverence for it, as even to adore the creatures that were of uſe in it. The Perſians, in the heighth of their power, had overſeers in every province to look after the tillage of the ground. Cyrus the younger, delighted in planting and cultivating a garden with his own hands. As to the Chaldeans, we cannot doubt of their being well ſkilled in huſbandry, if we reflect upon the fruitfulneſs of the plains of Babylon, which produced two or three hundred grains for one. In a word, the hiſtory of China teaches us, that agriculture was alſo in high eſteem amongſt them in the moſt ancient and beſt times. Nothing but the tyranny of the northern nations has made it ſo generally diſeſteemed.

Varro's Preface.

Xenoph. Oecon.

Herod. i.

Let us then diveſt ourſelves of the mean opinion we have conceived of it from our infancy. Inſtead of our villages, where we ſee on one ſide caſtles and houſes of pleaſure, and

on the other, miſerable huts and cottages, let us imagine we ſaw thoſe ſpacious farms which the Romans called villas, that contained an apartment for the maſter, an inner yard for poultry, barns, ſtables, and ſervants houſes; and all this in exact proportion, well built, kept in good repair and exceeding clean. We may ſee deſcriptions of them in Varro and Columella. Theſe ſlaves were moſt of them happier than our country people, well fed, well cloath'd, without any care upon their hands for the ſuſtenance of their families. The maſters, frugal as they were, lived more to their ſatisfaction than our gentry. We read in Xenophon, of an Athenian citizen, who, taking a walk every morning into the fields to look after his workmen, at the ſame time promoted his health by the exerciſe of his body, and increaſed his ſubſtance by his diligence to make the moſt of it. So that he was rich enough to give liberally to religious uſes, the ſervice of his friends and country. Tully mentions ſeveral farmers in Sicily, ſo rich and magnificent, as to have their houſes furniſhed with ſtatues of great value, and be ſerved in gold and ſilver plate of chac'd work.

Xenoph. Oecon.

Lib. iv. in Verr.

In fine, it muſt be owned, that as long as the nobility and rich men of a country were not above this moſt antient of all profeſſions, their lives were more happy, becauſe more conformable to nature. They lived longer, and in better health, their bodies were fitter for the fatigues of war and travelling, and their minds more ſerious and compoſed. Being leſs idle, they were not ſo tired of themſelves, nor ſo ſollicitous in refining their pleaſures. Labour gave a reliſh to the ſmalleſt diverſions. They had fewer evil deſigns in their heads, and leſs temptation to put them in execution. Their plain and frugal way of living did not admit of extravagance, or occaſion their running into debt. There were, of conſequence, fewer law ſuits, ſelling up of goods, and families ruin'd: fewer frauds, outrages, and ſuch other crimes, as real or imaginary poverty makes men commit, when they are not able or willing to work. The worſt is, that the example of the rich and noble influences every body elſe; whoever thrives ſo as to be never ſo little above the dregs of the people is aſhamed to work, eſpecially at huſbandry. Hence come ſo many ſhifts to live by one's wits, ſo many new contrivances as are invented every day, to draw money out of one

purſe into another. God knows beſt, how innocent all theſe unnatural ways of living are: They are at leaſt moſt of them very precarious. Whereas the earth will always maintain thoſe that cultivate it, if other people do not take from them the produce of it.

So far then is the country and laborious life of the Iſraelites from making them contemptible, that it is a proof of their wiſdom, good education, and reſolution to obſerve the rules of their fathers. They knew the firſt man was placed in the terreſtrial paradiſe to work there; and that after his fall, he was condemned to more laborious and ungrateful toil. They were convinced of thoſe ſolid truths ſo often repeated in the books of Solomon: that *Poverty is the fruit of lazineſs.* That *he who ſleeps in ſummer, inſtead of minding his harveſt, or that ploughs not in winter for fear of the cold, deſerves to beg and have nothing.* That *plenty is the natural conſequence of labour and induſtry.* That *riches, too haſtily got, are not bleſſed.* There we ſee frugal poverty, with cheerfulneſs and plainneſs, preferred to riches and abundance, with ſtrife and inſolence; the inconvenience of the two extremes of poverty and wealth, and the Wiſe Man's deſires, con-

Gen. ii. 15.
Ib. iii. 17.
Prov. x. 4.
Ib. 5.
Prov. xx. 4. 13.
Ib. xxviii. 19.
Ib. xx. 21.
Ib. xvii. 1. and xix. 1.
Ib. xxx. 8, 9.

confined to the neceſſaries of Life. He enters into a minute detail of œconomical precepts: *Prepare thy work*, ſays he, *without, and make it fit for thyſelf in the field*, and afterwards *build thine houſe:* which is the ſame with that maxim in Cato, that planting requires not much conſideration, but building a great deal. Prov. xxiv. 27.

Now that which goes by the name of *work*, *buſineſs*, *goods*, in the book of Proverbs, and throughout the whole Scripture, conſtantly relates to country affairs; it always means lands, vines, oxen and ſheep. From thence are borrowed moſt of the metaphorical expreſſions. Kings and other chiefs are called *ſhepherds*, and the people, their flocks; to govern them, is *to find paſture for them.* Thus, the Iſraelites ſought their livelihood only from the moſt natural ſources, which are lands and cattle: and from hence, all that enriches mankind, whether by manufactures, trade, rents, or trafficking with money is ultimately derived.

CHAP. III.

The Nature of their Soil. It's Fruitfulneſs.

THEY dwelt in the land that was promiſed to the Patriarchs, which the Scripture often deſcribes as flowing with milk and honey, to expreſs it's great fertility. This country, which is ſo hot in compariſon of ours, lies a great way within the temperate zone, between 31 and 33 degrees of northern latitude. It is bounded on the ſouth, by very high mountains, that defend it from the ſcorching winds that blow from the Arabian deſarts, and which run as far to the eaſt as they do. The Mediterranean, which bounds it to the weſt north weſt, ſupplies it with refreſhing breezes; and mount Libanus, that is ſituated more to the north, intercepts thoſe that are colder. The Mediterranean is what the Scripture commonly calls *the Great Sea:* for the Hebrews knew little of the ocean, and gave the name of *ſeas* to lakes and all great waters. The inland part of the country is varied with a great many mountains and hills proper for vines, fruit trees, and ſmall cattle: and the vallies abound with ſtreams, very neceſſary to water the country, which has

has no river but Jordan. There is ſeldom any rain, but at certain times: it falls in the ſpring and autumn, and is therefore called *the evening and morning rain* in Scripture, which reckons the year as one day. In ſummer, the great dews ſupply the ſcarcity of rain. They had plains fit for tillage and paſture, particularly the great plain of Galilee: and this variety of land, within ſo ſmall a compaſs, muſt needs afford very beautiful landſkips, eſpecially where a country is well peopled and cultivated.

For we are not to judge of the holy land from the condition it is now in. From the time of the Cruſades, it was laid waſte by continual wars, 'till it became ſubject to the Turks. By this means it is almoſt deſolate. There is nothing to be ſeen but little paultry villages, ruins, lands uncultivated and deſerted, but full of high graſs, which ſhews their natural fertility. The Turks neglect it, as they do their other provinces; and ſeveral of the Arabian clans, called Bedouins, encamp there at pleaſure, and plunder it with impunity. To know then what it was formerly, we muſt conſult antient authors, Joſephus, but above all the holy Scriptures. Conſider the report which the ſpies made that

Joſeph. p. 812, and 873. Paris edit.

were

Numb. xiii. 23. were ſent by Moſes, and the prodigious bunch of grapes they brought back. And that we we may not be ſurprized at it, let us compare our grapes in France with thoſe in Italy, which is a cold country in compariſon of Paleſtine. It is the ſame with regard to moſt of our fruits. Their names ſtill ſhew that we had them originally from Aſia and Africa: but they have not retained their bigneſs and natural flavour with their names.

Ezek. xxvii. 17. The Iſraelites had vaſt crops of corn and barley: wheat is reckoned amongſt the chief commodities that they carried to Tyre. They had plenty of oil and honey. The mountains of Judah and Ephraim were great vineyards. The palm trees that grew about Jericho, yielded a conſiderable profit; and it was the only place in the world, where the genuine balſam tree was to be found.

Joſeph. p. 719.

Plin. lib. xiii. c. iv.

This fertility of their country, and the pains they took to cultivate it, account for its maintaining ſuch a multitude of people, tho' it was of ſo ſmall extent. For what the Scripture ſays of it, ſeems hardly credible at firſt ſight. When the people firſt came into this land, there were more than ſix hundred thouſand men bearing arms, from twenty years old to ſixty. In the war of Gibeah, the

Numb. xi. 21.

the tribe of Benjamin alone, which was the leaſt of all, had an army of twenty ſix thouſand men, and the reſt of the people had one of four hundred thouſand. Saul headed two hundred and ten thouſand men againſt the Amalekites, when he rooted them out. David always kept up twelve corps, each conſiſting of twenty four thouſand men, which ſerved by the month, and amounted to two hundred and eighty thouſand. And when he numbered the people, which brought down the wrath of God upon him, there were one million three hundred thouſand fighting men. Jehoſhaphat had more in proportion: for tho' he had ſcarce a third part of David's kingdom, he had more troops fit for war; which, altogether, made eleven hundred and threeſcore thouſand men, all under his immediate command, beſides the garriſons in his ſtrong places.

Judg. xx. 16. 1 Sam. xv. 4. 1 Chron. xxvii. 1. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. 2 Chron. xvii. 14, 15, &c.

Nor is there any thing incredible in all this: we ſee examples to the ſame purpoſe in profane hiſtory. The great city of Thebes in Egypt furniſhed out of it's own inhabitants alone, ſeven hundred thouſand fighting men. In the year 188, from the foundation of Rome, when Servius Tullius firſt numbered the people, they reckoned eighty thouſand

Tacit. Annal. ii. 70. Liv. i. 24.

thouſand citizens fit to bear arms. Yet they had nothing to ſubſiſt upon but the land about Rome, which is now moſt of it barren and deſolate: for their dominion did not extend above eight or ten leagnes.

That was the chief foundation of their politicks in old time. *In the multitude of people,* ſays the Wiſe Man, *is the king's honour, but in the want of people is the deſtruction of the prince.* They ſupported themſelves much leſs by cunning than real ſtrength. Inſtead of being induſtrious in ſetting ſpies upon their neighbours, and endeavouring to ſow diviſions amongſt them, or gain credit by falſe reports, they took pains to people and cultivate their own country, and make the moſt of it they poſſibly could, whether it was ſmall or great.

Prov. xiv. 28.

They endeavoured to make marriages eaſy, and the lives of married people comfortable, to get health and plenty, and draw out of the ground all it could produce. They employed their citizens in labour, inſpired them with a love of their country, unanimity amongſt themſelves, and obedience to the laws: this is what they called politicks.—Theſe are fine maxims, it may be ſaid; but let us come to matters of fact. Shew us how it is poſſible, that ſo ſmall a country as Paleſtine, ſhould main-

maintain ſo great a number of people. In order to do this, we muſt have patience to go thro' a ſhort calculation, and not think it below us to deſcend to particulars, which is the only way of proving it to ſatisfaction.

Joſephus has preſerved a valuable fragment of Hecatæus the Abderite, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, and was a courtier of Ptolemy the firſt. After relating many remarkable particulars concerning the manners of the Jews, he adds, that the country they inhabited, contains about three million *arures* of very rich and fruitful ground. The arure, according to Euſtathius, was a hundred cubits, that is, one hundred and fifty feet, which, multiplied into ſo many ſquare feet, make twenty two thouſand five hundred. Now, our *arpent*, or acre of a hundred perches, contains forty thouſand ſquare feet, reckoning the perch but twenty feet. So nine of our arpents make ſixteen arures.

Joſeph. cont. App. c. i. p. 1408.

Ib. 1409. Euſtath. ex Hom.

I have informed myſelf of the produce of our beſt land, and find that it yields five quarters of corn *per* arpent, Paris meaſure. I have enquired likewiſe, how much goes to the ſuſtenance of one man, and find, that, at the allowance of two pounds and ſix ounces of bread *per* day, he conſumes half a *mine* of corn each month,

month, which comes to thirty ſix buſhels *per* year. But this would not have been enough for the Iſraelites; we muſt give them at leaſt double, and it may be proved from Scripture. When God gave them manna in the wilderneſs, he ordered each man to take an omer of it every day, neither more nor leſs; and it is often ſaid, that it was as much as a man could eat. Now, an omer, reduced to our meaſure, held above five pints, and it's weight was more than five pounds and a half. It was then about eighty four buſhels *per* year. Conſequently each arpent could maintain but two men at moſt; and three millions of arures making one million ſix hundred eighty ſeven thouſand five hundred arpents, would feed three millions, three hundred and ſeventy five thouſand men.

Exod. xvi. 16.

Ibid. ver. 18.

I know very well this number would not be ſufficient to furniſh out the one million two hundred thouſand fighting men of Jehoſhaphat. He had not dominion over half the land: and tho' all the Iſraelites bore arms without diſtinction of conditions, there were always a great many perſons amongſt them unfit for war. We muſt reckon very near as many women as men, a great many old men, and more children: and tho' in proportion they

they need leſs food, however it muſt require a great deal to ſuffice ſuch a multitude. Beſides they were obliged by the law to let the land have reſt every ſeven years.

But it muſt be obſerved that this paſſage in Hecatæus relates only to the plough'd lands of the Jews, and thoſe too that were moſt fruitful. For if we take the whole extent of the land of Iſrael, it would be fourteen times as much. It cannot be computed at leſs than five degrees ſquare according to our maps. Now one degree makes two millions nine hundred thirty thouſand, two hundred fifty nine ſquare arpents; and the five degrees, fourteen millions, ſix hundred fifty one thouſand, two hundred ninety five arpents. So that it is evident that Hecatæus has reckoned only a ſmall part. He has left out what the Samaritans enjoyed in his time, their lakes, deſarts, and barren grounds, vineyards, plantations and paſtures, of which they muſt have had a large quantity for the ſupport of their great herds of cattle. For, beſides what they bred, they had ſome from other countries. The king of Moab paid Ahab king of Iſrael a tribute of a hundred thouſand lambs, and as many rams. Other Arabians brought Jehoſhaphat

ſeven

2. Chron. xvii. 11. ſeven thouſand ſeven hundred rams, and as many he goats.

All this cattle was a great help to maintaining them, not only by the fleſh, but the milk. Conſidering that the Iſraelites lived in a ſimple manner, and laid out all their good ground in tillage: for they had few groves, no parks for hunting, nor avenues, nor flower gardens. We ſee by the ſong of Solomon, that their gardens were full of fruit trees and aromatick plants; we may therefore be in ſtill leſs concern for their lodging than their food, ſince half, nay a quarter of an arpent is more than ſufficient to lodge not only one man, but a whole family with eaſe and convenience.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Riches of the Iſraelites.

EACH Iſraelite had then his field to till, and the ſame that had been allotted to his anceſtors in the time of Joſhua. They could neither change their place, nor enrich themſelves to any great degree. The law of Jubilee had provided againſt that by revoking all alienations every fifty years, and forbiding to exact debts, not only this forty ninth

ninth year, but every ſabbatical year: for as the ground lay fallow thoſe years, it was but reaſonable to put a ſtop to law proceedings at the ſame time. Now this difficulty of being paid again, made it not ſo eaſy to borrow money, and conſequently leſſened the opportunities of running out; which was the deſign of the law. Beſides, the impoſſibility of making laſting purchaſes gave a check to ambition and anxiety: every body was confined to the portion of his anceſtors, and took a pleaſure in making the beſt of it, knowing it would never go out of the family. Levit. xxv. 10, 11. &c. Joſeph. l. iii. c. 10.

This attachment was even a religious duty, founded upon the law of God: and from thence proceeded the generous oppoſition made by Naboth, when king Ahab would have perſuaded him to ſell *the inheritance of his fathers.* So the law ſays they were no more than uſufructuaries of their land, or rather God's tenants, who was the true proprietor of it. They were obliged to pay no rent, but the tenths and firſt fruits which he had commanded: and Samuel reckons taxes upon corn and wine, as one of the incroachments of kings that he threatens the people with. All the Iſraelites were then very near equal in riches as well as quality: and if, by 1 Kings xxi. 3. Levit. xxv. 23. 1 Sam. viii. 15.

the increaſe of a family, the eſtate in land was forced to be divided into more ſhares, it was to be made up with induſtry and labour, by tilling the ground more carefully, and breeding greater numbers of cattle in the deſarts and commons.

Thus it was cattle and other moveables that made one richer than another. They bred the ſame ſort of creatures as the Patriarchs did, and always many more females than males; otherwiſe they had been liable to many inconveniencies, for the law forbad to caſtrate them. They had no horſes, nor are they of any great uſe in mountainous countries: their kings had them out of Egypt, when they had occaſion for them. The common way of riding was upon aſſes, even amongſt the rich. To give us a great idea of Jair, one of the judges over the people, the Scripture tells us that he had thirty ſons riding upon thirty aſſes, and rulers of thirty cities. It is recorded of Abdon, another judge, that he had forty ſons, and thirty grandſons, that rode upon threeſcore and ten aſſes: and in the Song of Deborah the captains of Iſrael are deſcribed as mounted upon ſleek and ſhining aſſes *.

Lev. xxii. 24.

Judg. x. 4.

Ib. xii. 14.

Ib. v. 10.

* צחרות ſignifies not only *white*, as it is tranſlated in

It

It does not appear that they had great numbers of ſlaves, neither had they occaſion for them, being ſo induſtrious and numerous in ſo ſmall a country. They choſe rather to make their children work, whom they were obliged to maintain: who ſerved them better than any ſlaves. The Romans found a great inconvenience at laſt from that infinite multitude of ſlaves of all nations, which luxury and effeminacy had introduced amongſt them: it was one of the chief cauſes of the ruin of that empire.

Ready money could not be very common amongſt the Iſraelites: there was no great occaſion for it in a country of little trade, and where it was ſcarce poſſible to alienate lands or run into debt. They were forbid to take uſury of one another, though they might of ſtrangers: but, if they obſerved their law, it was no eaſy matter to have any dealing with foreigners. Thus their wealth, as I ſaid before, conſiſted chiefly in land and cattle.

Levit. xxv. 10. Deut. xv. 1. 3. Levit. xxv. 36. Deut. xxiii. 19. 2 Chron. ii. 17.

And they are riches of this kind which God promiſes them, ſuch as are moſt natural and ſubſtantial. He ſpeaks to them neither of

our bibles, but *ſleek* or *ſhining*, *nitentes*, as the vulgate has it. And probably the aſſes here mentioned might be both, the author's words are *ânes polis et luiſant.*

gold, nor ſilver, nor precious ſtones, nor fine furniture; much leſs of other riches which depend more upon trade, and the inventions of men: But he ſays he will ſend rain in its ſeaſon, that the earth ſhall bring forth corn in abundance, that the trees ſhall be laden with fruit, that the harveſt, the vintage and ſeed time ſhall follow one another without interruption. He promiſes them plenty of food, undiſturbed ſleep, ſafety, peace, and even victory over their enemies. He adds, that he will make them increaſe and multiply by looking favourably upon them, that his bleſſing ſhall make their wives fruitful, that he will bleſs their herds of cattle, and flocks of ſheep, their granaries and cellars, and the works of their hands. Theſe are the temporal good things which God allows men to expect from him.

Levit. xxvi. 3. &c.

Deut. xxviii. 4.

CHAP. V.

Their arts and trades.

WE know no people more entirely addicted to agriculture than the Iſraelites. The Egyptians and Syrians joined manufactures, navigation, and trade to it: but above all the Phœnicians, who finding themſelves

themſelves ſtraitened in point of room, from the time that the Iſraelites drove them out of their country, were obliged to live by trade, and be in a manner brokers and factors for all the reſt of the world. The Greeks imitated them, and excelled chiefly in arts. On the contrary, the Romans deſpiſed mechanicks, and applied themſelves to commerce: as for the Iſraelites, their land was ſufficient to maintain them; and the ſea coaſts were, for the moſt part, poſſeſſed by the Philiſtines, and the Canaanites, who were the Phœnicians. There was only the tribe of Zabulon, whoſe ſhare of land lay near the ſea, that had any temptation to trade; which ſeems to be foretold in the bleſſings of Jacob and Moſes.

Joſeph. Gont. App. l. i. 12.

Gen. xlix. 13. Deut. xxxiii. 19.

Nor do we ſee that they applied themſelves any more to manufactures. Not that arts were not then invented: Many of them are older than the flood; and we find that the Iſraelites had excellent workmen at leaſt as ſoon as the time of Moſes. Bezaleel and Aholiab, who made the tabernacle and every thing that was neceſſary for the ſervice of God, are an inſtance that put it out of diſpute. It is ſurprizing how they came to be ſo well ſkilled in arts that were not only very difficult, but very different from one another. They

Ex. xxxi. 2. and 6. xxxvi. xxxvii. &c.

underſtood melting of metals, cutting and engraving precious ſtones: they were joyners, makers of tapiſtry, embroiderers and perfumers.

Ex. xxxi. 5. There are two of theſe arts that I moſt of all admire, the cutting of jewels and the caſting of figures; ſuch as the cherubims of the ark, and the golden calf which was made at that time. They that underſtand handicraft ever ſo little, know how much ingenuity and what a number of tools thoſe works require. If they were invented before, it is a ſign that even the arts which ſerve only for ornament were then brought to great perfection: and if they had any ſecret to do the ſame thing with more eaſe and a leſs apparatus, it was ſtill a higher degree of improvement. But this only by the by, to ſhew that people were not ſo dull and ignorant in theſe ancient times as many imagine, the world being two thouſand five hundred years old in the days of Moſes.

But whether theſe two famous workmen had learnt from the Egyptians, or their ſkill was miraculous and inſpired by God, as the Scripture ſeems to ſay, it does not appear that they had any to ſucceed them, nor that any of the Iſraelites were artificers by profeſſion and

and worked for the public till the time of the kings. When Saul began to reign, it is taken notice of, that there was no workman that underſtood forging iron in all the land of Iſrael: and that they were forced to go to the Philiſtines to ſharpen even the inſtruments which they uſed in huſbandry. It is true this was owing to the oppreſſion of the Philiſtines, to hinder them from making arms. But ſeveral years after, David was obliged, when he fled, to take the ſword of Goliah, which muſt have been rather too heavy for him, and take it too out of God's tabernacle, where it was hung up for a laſting monument of his victory. This makes me think there were no arms to be bought.

1 Sam. xiii. 19.

1 Sam. xxi. 9.

1 Sam. xxi. 9.

It ſeems likewiſe as if there was no bread ſold; ſince, upon the ſame occaſion, Abimelech the prieſt was reduced to give David the ſhew bread: which intimates moreover that the people kept but little bread in their houſes, it may be, upon account of the country's being ſo hot. So the witch, to whom Saul went, made him bread on purpoſe when ſhe entertained him, that he might recover his ſtrength. Every one had an oven in his own houſe, ſince the law threatens them as with a great misfortune that ten women

1 Sam. xxviii. 24.

Ibid.

Levit. xxvi. 26. men ſhould bake their bread at one oven. At Rome there were no bakers till five hundred eighty years after the foundation.

Plin. xvii. cap. 11.

If one was to reckon up all trades particularly, it would appear that many would have been of no uſe to them. Their plain way of living and the mildneſs of the climate made that long train of conveniencies unneceſſary, which we think it hard to be without, tho' vanity and effeminacy, more than real want, have introduced them. And as to things that were abſolutely neceſſary, there were few of them that they did not know how to make themſelves. All ſorts of food were cooked within doors. The women made bread and prepared the victuals, they ſpun wool, made ſtuffs and wearing apparel: the men took care of the reſt.

Odyſſ. xiv. Homer deſcribes old Eumæus making his own ſhoes, and ſays, that he had built fine

Odyſſ. xxiii. ſtalls for the cattle he bred. Ulyſſes himſelf built his own houſe, and ſet up his bed with great art, the ſtructure of which ſerved to

Ibid. make him known to Penelope again. When he left Calypſo, it was he alone that built and rigg'd the ſhip; from all which we ſee the ſpirit of theſe ancient times. It was eſteemed an honour to underſtand the making

of

of every thing neceſſary for life one's ſelf, without any dependence upon others, and it is that which Homer moſt commonly calls *wiſdom* and *knowledge*. Now, I muſt ſay, the authority of Homer appears to me very great in this caſe. As he lived about the time of the prophet Elias, and in Aſia minor, all the accounts that he gives of the Greek and Trojan cuſtoms, have a wonderful reſemblance with what the Scripture informs us of concerning the manners of the Hebrews and other eaſtern people: only the Greeks, not being ſo antient, were not ſo polite. Marm. Arundel.

But, however it might be in former times, we are ſure that David left a great number of artificers in his kingdom of all ſorts, maſons, carpenters, blackſmiths, goldſmiths, and indeed all ſuch as work in ſtone, wood, and metals. And that we may not think they were ſtrangers, it is ſaid that Solomon choſe out of Iſrael thirty thouſand workmen, and that he had eighty thouſand hewers in the mountains. It is true, he borrowed workmen of the king of Tyre, and owned that his ſubjects did not underſtand cutting wood ſo well as the Sidonians, and that he ſent for Hiram, an excellent founder, to make the ſacred veſſels. 1 Chron. xxii. 15. 1 Kings v. 13. Ib. 15. Ib. vii. 13.

But

But luxury increaſing after the diviſion of the two kingdoms, there is reaſon to believe they had always plenty of workmen. In the genealogy of the tribe of Judah, we may obſerve, there is a place called the *valley of craftſmen*, becauſe, ſays the Scripture, they dwelt there. There is likewiſe mention made in the ſame place, of people that wrought fine linen, and of potters, who worked for the king, and dwelt in his gardens. All this ſhews the reſpect that was paid to famous mechanicks, and the care that was taken to preſerve their memory. The prophet Iſaiah, amongſt his menaces againſt Jeruſalem, foretells, that God will take away from her the *cunning artificers:* and when it was taken, it is often ſaid, that they carried away the very workmen. But we have a proof from Ezekiel, that they never had any conſiderable manufactures, when the prophet, deſcribing the abundance of their merchandize which came to Tyre, mentions nothing brought from the land of Judah and Iſrael, but wheat, oil, reſin, and balm; all of them commodities that the earth itſelf produced.

1 Chron. iv, 14.

Iſaiah iii. 3.

2 Kings xxiv. 14. Ezek. xxvii. 17.

Theſe were the employments of the Iſraelites, and their manner of ſubſiſting. Let us now come to ſomething more particular, and deſcribe

deſcribe their apparel, their houſes, furniture, food, and whole manner of living as exactly as we can. They roſe early, as the Scripture obſerves in an infinite number of places, that is, as often as it mentions any action tho' never ſo inconſiderable. Hence it comes, that, in their ſtyle, *to riſe early* ſignifies in general, to do a thing ſedulouſly and with a good will; thus it is frequently ſaid, that *God roſe up early* to ſend the prophets to his people, and exhort them to repentance. It is a conſequence of country labour. The Greeks and Romans followed the ſame cuſtom: they roſe very early, and worked 'till night: they bathed, ſupped, and went to bed in good time.

2 Chron. xxxvi. 15. Jerem. vii. 13. and xi. 7. and xxxv. 14.

CHAP. VI.

Their wearing apparel.

AS to the cloaths of the Iſraelites, we cannot know exactly the ſhape of them. They had no pictures or ſtatues, and there is no coming at a right notion of theſe things without ſeeing them. But one may give a gueſs at them, from the ſtatues which remain of the Greeks and other nations: for as to modern pictures, moſt of them ſerve only to give us falſe ideas. I do not ſpeak only

only of thoſe Gothick paintings, in which every perſon, let him have lived where and when he would, is dreſſed like thoſe the painter was uſed to ſee; that is, as the French or Germans were ſome hundred years ago: I mean the works of the greateſt painters, except Raphael, Pouſſin, and ſome few others that have thoroughly ſtudied the *manner* or *cuſtom* of each age, as they call it. All the reſt have had no more ſenſe than to paint the people of the eaſt, ſuch as they ſaw at Venice and other ports of Italy: and for the ſtories of the New Teſtament, the Jews like thoſe of their own country. However, as moſt Scripture painting is copied from theſe originals, we have taken the impreſſion of it from our infancy, and are uſed to form to ourſelves an idea of the Patriarchs with turbans, and beards down to their waiſt, and of the Phariſees in the Goſpel with hoods and pouches. There is no great matter in being deceived in all this; but it is better not to be deceived, if poſſible.

The antients commonly wore long garments, as moſt nations in the world ſtill do; and as we ourſelves did in France not above two hundred years ago. One may much ſooner cover the whole body all at once, than each

each part of it ſingly; and long garments have more dignity and gracefulneſs. In hot countries they always wore a wide dreſs, and never concerned themſelves about covering the arms or legs, or wore any thing upon the feet, but ſoles faſtened in different manners. Thus their dreſs took but little making, it was only a large piece of cloth ſhaped into a garment, there was nothing to cut, and not much to ſew. They had likewiſe the art of weaving gowns with ſleeves all of one piece and without ſeam, as our Saviour's coat was. John xix. 23.

The faſhions never changed, nor do they now, in any part of the eaſt. And ſince cloaths are made to cover the body, and men's bodies are alike in all ages, there is no occaſion for the prodigious variety of dreſſes, and ſuch frequent changes as we are uſed to. It is reaſonable to ſeek that which is moſt convenient, that the body may be ſufficiently defended againſt the injuries of the weather, according to the climate and ſeaſon, and be at perfect liberty in all it's motions. There muſt be a proper reſpect paid to decency, age, ſex, and profeſſion. One may have an eye likewiſe to the handſomeneſs of cloaths, provided, under that pretence, we do not wear uneaſy ornaments, and are contented, as the antients were,

were, with agreeable colours and natural drapery: but when once we have found what is handſome and convenient, we ought by no means to change.

Nor are they the wiſeſt people who invent new faſhions: they are generally women and young people, with the aſſiſtance of ſhop-keepers and taylors, who have no other view but their own intereſt. Yet theſe trifles have very grievous conſequences. The expence occaſioned by ſuperfluous ornaments, and the changing of faſhions, is very hard upon moſt people of moderate circumſtances, and is one reaſon that marrying is ſo difficult; it is a continual ſource of quarrels betwixt the old and young, and the reverence for antient times is much leſſened by it. Young fantaſtical people, when they ſee their anceſtor's pictures in dreſſes which are only ridiculous becauſe they are not uſed to them, can hardly believe they were over and above wiſe, or their maxims fit to be followed. In a word, they that pretend to be ſo very nice and exact in their dreſs, muſt ſpend a great deal of their time in it, and make it a ſtudy, of no uſe ſurely towards improving their minds, or making them capable of great things.

As the antients did not change their fashions, the rich had always great quantities of cloaths by them, and were not liable to the inconvenience of waiting for a new ſuit, or having it made up in haſte. Lucullus had five thouſand cloaks in his wardrobe, which was a ſort of military dreſs; by which we may judge of what he had beſides. It was common to make preſents of cloaths: and then they always gave two ſuits, for change, and that one might be worn whilſt the other was waſhing, as we do with our ſets of linen. Hor. Epiſt. l. i. 6.

The ſtuffs were generally made of wool. In Egypt and Syria they wore alſo fine linen, cotton and byſſus which was finer than all the reſt. This byſſus, which the Scripture ſo often mentions, is a ſort of ſilk of a golden yellow that grows upon great ſhell fiſh. As to our ſilk made from worms, it was unknown in the time of the Iſraelites, and the uſe of it did not become common on this ſide the Indies, till more than five hundred years after Chr. The beauty of their cloaths conſiſted in the fineneſs and colour of the ſtuff. The moſt eſteemed were the white and the purple, red or violet. And, it ſeems, white was the colour moſt in uſe amongſt the Iſraelites, as well as the Greeks and Romans: Geſner. Hiſt. Anim. l. iv. de Pinnâ.

Eccleſ. ix. x. ſince Solomon ſays, *let thy garments be always white*, meaning clean. Nothing in reality can be plainer than to make uſe of wool or flax, juſt as nature produces them, without dying. Young people of both ſexes wore cloaths variegated with divers colours. Such was Joſeph's coat which his brethren ſpoiled him of when they ſold him: and of the ſame ſort were the gowns which king's daughters wore in the time of David.

Gen. xxxvii. 32.

2 Sam. xiii. 18

The ornaments of their habits were fringes or borders of purple or embroidery, and claſps of gold or precious ſtones where they were neceſſary. Greatneſs conſiſted in changing dreſs often, and wearing only ſuch cloaths as were thoroughly clean and whole. Beſides no body will doubt that the Iſraelites went very plain in their dreſs, if we conſider how remarkable the Greeks and Romans were for it, even in the time of their greateſt luxury. We ſee it in the ancient ſtatues, Trajan's pillar, and other pieces of ſculpture.

The garments commonly mentioned in ſcripture are the *tunick* and *mantle:* and the Greek and Roman dreſs conſiſted of theſe two only. The tunick was made wide, to leave freedom of motion at work: they looſed it when they were unemployed; but in travel-

travelling or at work they tied it up with a girdle. From thence comes the phraſe ſo frequent in Scripture, *Ariſe, gird up thy loins, and do this.* The Iſraelites were ordered to wear ribbons of blue on the borders of their garments, to make them continually mindful of the law of God. They had the head covered with a ſort of tiara, like that of the Perſians and Chaldeans, for it was a ſign of mourning to go bare-headed; and they wore their own hair, for to be ſhaved was another mark of affliction. As to the beard, it is very certain they wore it long, by the inſtance of the ambaſſadors that David ſent to the king of the Ammonites, half of whoſe beards that ill adviſed prince ſhaved off to affront them: ſo that they were forced to ſtay ſome time at Jericho to let their beards grow again before they could have the face to ſhew themſelves: he alſo cauſed their cloaths to be cut off in the middle, and in ſuch a manner as ſhews they wore them very long.

Num. xv. 38.

2 Sam. x. 4.

They bathed frequently, as is ſtill the cuſtom in hot countries, and waſhed their feet ſtill oftner; becauſe, wearing nothing but ſandals, they could not walk without gathering much duſt. From thence it comes that the

Scripture ſpeaks ſo much of waſhing the feet at firſt coming into a houſe, at ſetting down to victuals, and going to bed. Now becauſe water dries the ſkin and hair, they anointed themſelves either with plain oil or ſuch as had aromatick ſpices infuſed in it, which was commonly called *ointment*. They ſtill uſe it in the Indies.

We ſee in ſeveral parts of the Scripture after what manner the women dreſſed and adorned themſelves. God reproaching Jeruſalem with her breaches of faith, under the figure of a huſband who has brought his wife out of the greateſt miſery to heap bleſſings upon her, ſays by the prophet Ezekiel, that he has given her very fine ſtuffs, and of different colours, a ſilken girdle, purple ſhoes, bracelets, a necklace, ear-rings and a crown, or rather mitre, ſuch as the Syrian women uſed to wear a great while after; that he adorned her with gold and ſilver, and the moſt coſtly raiment.—When Judith dreſſed herſelf to go to Holofernes, it is ſaid that ſhe waſhed and anointed herſelf, that ſhe braided her hair, and put attire upon her head, that ſhe put on her garments of gladneſs, with ſandals upon her feet, and adorned herſelf with bracelets, ear-rings, and rings upon her fingers.

Ezek. xvi. 10, 11, &c.

Pictâ lupa barbara mitrâ. Juv. Sat. iii. 66.

Judith x. 3, &c.

fingers. In a word, we cannot desire a more particular account of these female ornaments than what we read in Isaiah, when he reproaches the daughters of Sion with their vanity and luxury: for corruption was then got to the highest pitch. Isaiah iii. 16, &c.

CHAP. VII.

Their furniture and houses.

THERE was occasion for much less furniture in those hot countries than in ours; and their plainess in all other respects gives us reason to think they had but little. The law often speaks of wooden and earthen vessels; and earthen ware was very common amongst the Greeks and Romans before luxury had crept in amongst them. They are mentioned amongst the things that were brought for the refreshment of David during the war with Absalom. 2 Sam. xvii. 28. We see the furniture that was thought necessary, in the words of the Shunamite woman who lodged the prophet Elisha: *Let us make, said she to her husband, a little chamber for the man of God, and set for him there a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick.* 2 Kings iv. 10. Their beds were no more than couches without curtains, except they were

ſuch light coverings as the Greeks called *canopies* * becauſe they ſerved to keep off the gnats. The great people had ivory bedſteds, as the prophet Amos reproaches the wealthy in his time, and they that were moſt delicate made their beds very ſoft, decked them with rich ſtuffs, and ſprinkled them with odoriferous waters. They placed the beds againſt the wall; for it is ſaid, when Hezekiah was threatned that he ſhould die ſoon, he turned his face to the wall to weep.

Amos, vi. 4.

Prov. vii. 16.

2 Kings, xx. 2.

The candleſtick mentioned amongſt Eliſha's furniture, was, probably, one of thoſe great ones that were ſet upon the ground to hold one or more lamps. Till then, and a long while after, even in the time of the Romans, they burnt nothing but oil to give light. From thence it is ſo common in Scripture to call every thing that enlightens the body or mind, whatever guides or refreſhes, by the name of *lamp*. There is not much reaſon to think they had tapeſtry in their houſes. They have occaſion for little in hot countries becauſe bare walls are cooler. They make uſe of it only to ſit and lie upon, and

* Κωνωπεῖον, from κώνωψ, *a gnat.*

Ezekiel

Ezekiel ſpeaks of it amongſt the merchandize which the Arabians brought to Tyre. Ezek. xxvii. 20.
It is alſo mentioned amongſt the things provided for David's refreſhment, which would incline one to think the Iſraelites uſed it in the camp, for in houſes they had chairs.

Their houſes differed from ours in all that we ſee ſtill in hot countries. Their roofs are flat, the windows cloſed with lattices or curtains, they have no chimneys, and lie for the moſt part on a ground floor.

We have a great many proofs in Scripture that roofs were flat in and about the land of Iſrael. Rahab hid the ſpies of Joſhua upon the roof of the houſe. When Samuel acquainted Saul that God had choſen him to be king, he made him lie all night upon the roof of the houſe, which is ſtill uſual in hot countries. David was walking upon the roof of his palace, when he ſaw Bethſheba bathing. When Abſalom had rebelled againſt his father, he cauſed a tent to be raiſed upon the roof of the ſame palace, where he lay with his father's concubines. This action was in a manner taking poſſeſſion of the kingdom, and made publick to ſhew that he was determined never to return to his duty. They ran to the tops

Joſh. ii. 6. 1 Sam. ix. 25. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Ib. xvi. 22.

of their houſes upon great alarms, as is plain from two paſſages in Iſaiah. All this ſhews the reaſon of the law, that ordered a battlement to be raiſed quite round the roof, leſt any body ſhould fall down and kill himſelf, and explains the expreſſion in the Goſpel, *what you have heard in the ear, publiſh on the houſe tops.* Every houſe was a ſcaffold ready built for any one that had a mind to make himſelf heard at a diſtance.

Iſai. xv. 3 & xxii. 1.

Deut. xxii. 8.

The caſements of windows are taken notice of in the Proverbs, the ſong of Solomon, and the ſtory of the death of Ahaziah king of Iſrael. When king Jehoiakim burnt the book which Jeremiah had written by the order of God, he was ſitting in his winter houſe with a fire on the hearth burning before him. From whence one may judge they had no * chimneys; which indeed are the

Prov. viii. 6. Song of Solomon, ii 9. 2 Kings i. 2.

Jer. xxxvi. 22.

* The fire which the king had *before* him, is ſuppoſed to be in a moveable ſtove, whence the vulgate tranſlates it, *arula coram eo, plena prunis*; and therefore had no fixt chimney to it. And that the ancients had none, hath been aſſerted by ſeveral of the learned, particularly by Manutius in Cic. Fam. l. vii. ep. x. and Lipſius, Ep. ad Belgas, iii. 75. and that the ſmoke went out at the windows, or at the tops of the houſes. Cato de re ruſt. c. xviii. ſaies, *focum parum circumverſum*, inven-

invention of cold countries. In hot climates they were ſatisfied with ſtoves for the kitchen. They made uſe of ſtone in building, eſpecially at Jeruſalem, where it was very common, and they knew how to cut it into very large pieces. There is mention made in Solomon's buildings, of ſtones eight or ten cubits long, that is, twelve or fifteen foot; and thoſe called *coſtly ſtones*, are, doubtleſs, different ſorts of marble. 1 Kings vii. 9, 10.

The beauty of their buildings conſiſted leſs in ornaments placed in certain parts, than in

priuſquam cubitum eat, habeat. The hearth could not be ſwept *round*, if it was, as with us, built in a chimney. Columella l. xi. c. ult. ſpeaks of the ſmoke adhering to the cielings over the hearth: *Fuligo, quæ ſupra focos tectis inhæret, colligi debet.* Seneca, ep. 90. deſcribes ſtove tubes, then lately invented, placed round the walls of the rooms, to throw an equal warmth into them. On the other hand, Dan. Barbarus in his comment on Vitruvius, and Ferrarius, i. 9. maintain, that they often had chimneys; but in the upper rooms, *in cœnationibus*, which is a reaſon why no remains of them are found, the higheſt ſtories firſt falling to ruin. Ariſtophanes Veſp. i. 2. 8. introduces an old man, ſhut up by his ſon, endeavouring to eſcape up the chimney. Herodot. vii. p. 578, 579. mentions the ſun ſhining upon the hearth down the chimney: and Appian. B. C. civ. ſays, ſome of the proſcribed hid themſelves in jakes, ſome in wells, ſome in chimneys, ἐς καπνώδεις ὑποφοίας. The reader may ſee more in the above-cited authors.

the whole model; in cutting and joining the ſtones, they took care to have all even and well dreſſed by the level and ſquare. This is what Homer ſays of the building he commends, and this ſort of beauty is ſtill admired in the antient Egyptian edifices. The Iſraelites made uſe of fragrant woods, as cedar and cypreſs, to wainſcot the inſide of the moſt pompous buildings, and to make the cielings and pillars of. We ſee it by the temple, and Solomon's palaces; and David ſays, that *he dwells in a houſe of cedar*, to expreſs the magnificence of his apartments.

2 Sam. v. 11.
Song of Sol. iii. 6.
2 Sam. vii. 2.

CHAP. VIII.

Their diet.

AS to what regards the table, the Iſraelites ate ſitting, as the Greeks did in Homer's time: and it is neceſſary to take notice of it, to diſtinguiſh one period from another. For afterwards, that is to ſay, from the reign of the Perſians, they ate, lying upon beds, as the Perſians and other eaſtern people did: from whom the Greeks and Romans alſo took the cuſtom. Regular people did not eat 'till after their work, and pretty late. Wherefore eating and drinking early in the morn-

Eſther i. 6, 7, 8.
Iſaiah v. 11.

morning ſignify intemperance and debauchery in Scripture. Their food was plain. They commonly mention only eating bread and drinking water: which is the reaſon that the word *bread* is generally taken in Scripture for all ſorts of victuals. They broke their bread without cutting it, becauſe they made uſe of none but ſmall, long, taper rolls, as is ſtill done in ſeveral countries. The firſt favour that Boaz ſhewed Ruth, was to let her drink of the ſame water with his young men, and come and eat with them, and dip her morſel in the vinegar: and we ſee, by the compliments ſhe made in return, that this was no ſmall favour. Ruth ii. 9, 14.

We may judge of their moſt common proviſions by the refreſhment David received at different times from Abigail, Ziba, and Barzillai, and by what was brought to him at Hebron. The ſorts there mentioned are bread and wine, wheat and barley, flower of both, beans, lentiles, parched corn, raiſins, dried figs, honey, butter, oil, ſheep, oxen, and fat calves. There is in this account a great deal of corn and pulſe, which was alſo the moſt common food of the antient Egyptians, and of the Romans in the beſt times, when they gave themſelves moſt to huſbandry. 1 Sam. xxv. 18. 2 Sam. xvi. 1. xvii. 28.

Hence

Clem. Alex. 2 Pædag. I. in fine. Hence came the illuſtrious names of Fabius, Piſo, Cicero, and Lentulus. The advice of the Wiſe man ſhews the uſe the Iſraelites made of milk. *Take care*, ſays he, *that thou*

Prov. xxvii. 27. *hæve goat's milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy houſhold, and for maintenance to thy maidens.*

Though it was lawful to eat fiſh, I do not find that it is mentioned 'till the later times. It is believed the antients deſpiſed it, as too

Plato Rep. iii. dainty and light food for robuſt men. Neither does Homer ſpeak of it, or the Greeks, in what they write relating to the heroick times. We hear but little of ſauces or high ſeaſoned diſhes amongſt the Hebrews. Their feaſts conſiſted of ſubſtantial, well-fed meat; and they reckoned milk and honey their greateſt dainties. Indeed, before ſugar was brought from the Indies, there was nothing known more agreeable to the taſte than honey. They preſerved fruits in it, and mixed it in the niceſt paſtry. Inſtead of milk, they often mention butter, that is, cream, which is the fineſt part of it. The offerings preſcribed by the law, ſhew, that, ever ſince the time of

Levit. ii. 4, 5, &c. Moſes, they had divers ſorts of paſtry, ſome kneaded with oil, others without it.

And

And here we muſt not omit the diſtinction of meats allowed or forbid by the law. It was not peculiar to the Hebrews to abſtain from certain animals out of a religious principle; the neighbouring people did the ſame. Neither the Syrians nor Egyptians ate any fiſh; and ſome have thought it was ſuperſtition that made the antient Greeks not eat it. The Egyptians of Thebes would eat no mutton, becauſe they worſhiped Ammon under the ſhape of a ram: but they killed goats. In other places they abſtained from goat's fleſh, and ſacrificed ſheep. The Egyptian prieſts uſed no meat nor drink imported from foreign countries: and as to the product of their own, beſides fiſh, they abſtained from beaſts that have a round foot, or divided into ſeveral toes, or that have no horns; and birds that live upon fleſh. Many would eat nothing that had life: and in the times of their purification they would not touch ſo much as eggs, herbs, or garden ſtuff. None of the Egyptians would eat beans. They accounted ſwine unclean: whoever touched one, tho' in paſſing by, waſhed himſelf and his cloaths. Socrates, in his commonwealth, reckons eating ſwine's-fleſh amongſt the ſuperfluous things introduced by luxury. Indeed they are of no

Herod. ii.

Porphyr. Abſtin. iv.

Herod ii.

Plato ii. Rep.

uſe

uſe but for the table. Every body knows that the Indian Bramins ſtill neither eat nor kill any ſort of animals, and it is certain they have not done it for more than two thouſand years.

The law of Moſes then had nothing new or extraordinary in this point: the deſign of it was to keep the people within reaſonable bounds, and to prevent their imitating the ſuperſtitions of ſome other nations, without leaving them quite at liberty, which they might have made an ill uſe of. For this abſtinence from particular ſorts of meat contributed to the preſervation of both their health and morals. It was not only to tame their untractable ſpirit that God impoſed this yoke, but to wean them from things that might be prejudicial. They were forbid to eat blood or fat: both are hard of digeſtion: and though ſtrong, working people, as the Iſraelites, might find leſs inconvenience from it than others, it was better to provide wholeſome food for them, ſince it was a matter of option. Swine's-fleſh is very * heavy upon the ſtomach; ſo are fiſh that have no ſcales. The

* The learned author ſeems to differ in this point from the general opinion of phyſicians, who hold nothing lighter or more eaſy of digeſtion.

ſolid

ſolid part is fat and oily, whether it be tender, as that of eels, or hard, as that of tunny, whale, or others of the ſame kind. Thus we may eaſily account for moſt of theſe things being forbid, as Clemens Alexandrinus has obſerved. [2] Pæd. 1. Caſſian. Inſtit. 5.

As to the moral reaſons, all ſenſible people have ever reckoned gluttony a vice that ought principally to be guarded againſt, as the beginning of moſt others. The Socratic Philoſophers ſtrongly recommended temperance; and Plato deſpaired of reforming the manners of the Sicilians, ſo long as they ate two great meals a day. It is ſuppoſed that what Pythagoras aimed at by enjoining abſtinence, was to make men juſt and diſintereſted in uſing themſelves to live on a little. Now, one of the chief branches of gluttony is a deſire of variety of diſhes. Too much ſoon palls, but, as variety is infinite, the itch after it is inſatiable. Plat. Ep. vii. in init.

Tertullian comprehends all theſe reaſons in the following paſſage: *If the Law takes away the uſe of ſome ſorts of meat, and pronounces creatures unclean that were formerly held quite otherwiſe, let us conſider that the deſign is to inure them to temperance, and look upon it as a reſtraint laid upon gluttons who hankered after the cucumbers and melons of Egypt, whilſt they* [2] in Marc. c. 18.

were

were eating the food of angels. Let us conſider it too as a remedy at the ſame time againſt exceſs and impurity, the uſual attendants of gluttony. It was partly likewiſe to extinguiſh the love of money, by taking away the pretence of it's being neceſſary for providing of ſuſtenance. It was finally to enable men to faſt with leſs inconvenience, upon religious occaſions, by uſing them to a moderate and plain diet.

CHAP. IX.

Their purifications.

THE purifications preſcribed by the law had the ſame foundation as the diſtinction of meats. The neighbouring people practiſed ſome of the like nature: amongſt others the Egyptians, whoſe prieſts ſhaved off all their hair every three days, and waſhed their bodies all over twice in the night, and two or three times a day. The legal purifications of the Iſraelites were of advantage in preſerving both their health and morals. The cleanneſs of the body is a ſymbol of the purity of ſoul: which is the reaſon that ſome devout people have affected to be dirty, to make themſelves more deſpicable, and to ſhew the abhorrence they had of their ſins

Herod. l. ii. Porphyr. de Abſtin.

the

the plainer, by their outward appearance. From thence too external purification is called *ſanctification*, becauſe it makes thoſe obſerve, at leaſt, an outward purity, who draw near to holy things. Nay, one may venture to ſay, that cleanlineſs is a natural conſequence of virtue; ſince filthineſs, for the moſt part, proceeds only from ſloth and meanneſs of ſpirit.

Beſides, cleanneſs is neceſſary to preſerve health and prevent ſickneſs, eſpecially in hot countries: accordingly we find people generally cleaner there. Heat inclines them to ſtrip themſelves, to bathe, and often change their cloaths. But in the cold countries we are afraid both of the air and water, and are more benumbed and ſluggiſh. It is certain, the naſtineſs in which moſt of our lower ſort of people live, eſpecially the pooreſt and thoſe that are in towns, either cauſes or increaſes many diſtempers. What would be the conſequence then in hot countries, where the air is ſooner corrupted, and the water more ſcarce? Beſides, the antients made but little uſe of linen, and woollen is not ſo eaſy to be cleaned.

Here let us admire the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, who gave his people laws that

were

were uſeful ſo many different ways: for they ſerved altogether to inure them to obedience, to keep them from ſuperſtition, to improve their manners, and preſerve their health. Thus, in the formation of plants and animals, we ſee many parts ſerve for different uſes. Now it was a matter of conſequence that the precepts that enjoined cleanlineſs ſhould make a part of their religion; for as they related to what was done within doors, and the moſt ſecret actions of life, nothing but the fear of God could keep the people from tranſgreſſing them. Yet God formed their conſcience by theſe ſenſible things, and made it familiar to them to own that nothing is hid from him, and that it is not ſufficient to be pure in the eyes of men alone. Tertullian underſtands theſe laws ſo, when he ſays, *He has preſcribed every thing even in the common tranſactions of life, and the behaviour of men both at home and abroad, ſo far as to take notice of their very furniture and veſſels; ſo that meeting every where the precepts of the law, they might not be one moment without the fear of God before them.* And afterwards, *to aid this law, which was rather light than burdenſome, the ſame goodneſs of God alſo inſtituted Prophets, who taught maxims worthy of him*; WASH YE, MAKE YE CLEAN,

In Marc. l. ii. c. 19.

Iſaiah i. 16.

PUT

PUT AWAY THE EVIL OF YOUR DOINGS FROM BEFORE MINE EYES, &c. So that the people were ſufficiently inſtructed in the meaning of all theſe ceremonies, and outward performances.

This is the foundation of thoſe laws which order bathing and waſhing one's cloaths after having touched a dead body, or unclean creature, and upon ſeveral other accidents. From thence comes the purifying of veſſels by water or fire, and of houſes where there appeared any corruption; and of women after child-bearing, and the ſeparation of lepers; though the white leproſy, which is the only ſort mentioned in Scripture, is rather a deformity than a diſeaſe. Levit. xi. 31, &c. xiii. 58. Numb. xxxi. 23. Levit. xiv. 48. Ib. xii. Ib. xiii. Aug. ii. Quæſt. Evang 40.

It belonged to the prieſts to ſeparate lepers, to judge of other legal impurities, and order the manner of their cleanſing. Thus they practiſed a branch of phyſick; and though phyſicians are ſometimes mentioned in Scripture, it is probable ſurgeons are meant: for the antients made no diſtinction betwixt theſe two profeſſions. The law ſpeaks of them, when it condemns him that hurts another to pay the phyſician's charges: and in other places we read of bandages, plaiſters, and ointments; but no where, that I can tell, of Iſaiah iii. 7. Ex. xxi. 19. Iſaiah i. 6. Jerem. viii. 22, xlvi. 11.

2 Chron. xvi. 12. purges or a courſe of phyſick. King Aſa, who had the gout, is blamed for putting too much confidence in phyſicians. Perhaps the Iſraelites ſtill followed the ſame maxims, as the Greeks of the heroic ages, when phyſicians, iii. Rep. as Plato informs us, applied themſelves to nothing but healing wounds by topical remedies, without preſcribing a regimen; ſuppoſing that other illneſſes would be prevented or eaſily got over by a good conſtitution and the prudent management of the ſick; as for wounds, they muſt of neceſſity happen ſometimes from divers accidents, even in the courſe of hard labour only.

The Iſraelites avoided converſing with ſtrangers, and it was a conſequence of thoſe laws that enjoined purifications and diſtinction of meats. For tho' moſt of their neighbours had ſimilar cuſtoms, they were not altogether the ſame. Thus, an Iſraelite had always a right to preſume, that any ſtranger he met with had eaten ſwine's fleſh, or ſacrifices offered to idols, or touched ſome unclean beaſt. Whence it came, that it was not lawful to eat with them, nor to go into their houſes. This diſtance was alſo of conſequence to their morals, ſerving as a fence againſt too great a familiarity with ſtrangers, which is always pernicious

nicious to the generality, and which was ſtill more ſo at that time becauſe of idolatry. The Egyptians were ſtrict obſervers of this maxim: the Scripture takes notice that they would not eat with the Hebrews: and Herodotus ſays they would neither ſalute a Greek, nor make uſe of his knife or plate. The Mahometans have ſeveral cuſtoms of the ſame nature at this day; but the Indians have more, and obſerve them with the greateſt ſuperſtition.

Gen. xliii. 32. Herod. ii.

They did not keep at an equal diſtance from all ſorts of ſtrangers, tho' they comprehended them all under the name of *Goim* or *Gentiles*. They had an averſion to all idolaters, eſpecially thoſe that were not circumciſed: for they were not the only people that practiſed circumciſion; it was uſed by all the deſcendants of Abraham, as the Iſhmaelites, Midianites, and Idumeans, the Ammonites and Moabites that were deſcended from Lot. The Egyptians themſelves, tho' their original was in no caſe the ſame with the Hebrews, looked upon circumciſion as a neceſſary purification, and held thoſe unclean that were not circumciſed. As for the Iſraelites, they bore with the uncircumciſed that worſhiped the true God, ſo far as to let them dwell in their

Herodot. Philo.

land, provided they obſerved the laws of nature, and abſtinence from blood. But if they got themſelves circumciſed, they were reputed children of Abraham, and conſequently obliged to obſerve the whole law of Moſes. The Rabbins call theſe laſt *proſelytes of juſtice*; and the faithful that were not circumciſed, they call *proſelytes by abode*, or *Noachides*, as being obliged to obſerve no precepts but thoſe that God gave to Noah when he came out of the ark. In Solomon's time there were one hundred and fifty three thouſand proſelytes in the land of Iſrael.

Selden. de Jure Nat.

2 Chron. ii. 17.

The ſtrangers that the Iſraelites were moſt of all obliged to avoid, were the nations that lay under a curſe, as deſcended from Canaan, whom God had commanded them to root out. I find none but them, as I ſaid before, with whom it was not lawful to marry. Moſes married a Midianite [a]. Boaz is commended

Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.

[a] If our author's comment is right, Dr. Warburton is miſtaken, in ſaying Solomon tranſgreſſed a law of Moſes, when he married Pharaoh's daughter: *Div. Leg.* book iv. ſect. v. 2d edit. And Dr. Jortin might leſs admire Theodoret's parallel between Moſes and Chriſt, in that the former married an Æthiopian woman, and the latter eſpouſed the church of the Gentiles. There was nothing ſo particular in the marriage of Moſes;

for

for having married Ruth the Moabite. Abſalom's mother was the king of Geſhur's daughter. Amaſa was the ſon of an Iſhmaelite, and of Abigail, David's ſiſter. Solomon married the king of Egypt's daughter, ſoon after he came to the crown, and at the time when he was moſt in God's favour: therefore what the Scripture afterwards ſays to blame his marrying with ſtrange women, muſt be underſtood of the Canaanitiſh women whom he married, and that, inſtead of converting them, he paid them ſuch a criminal complaiſance as to worſhip their idols.

2 Sam. iii. 3. 1 Chron. ii. 17. 1 Kings iii. 1. Ib. xi. 1.

Much more were marriages free amongſt the Iſraelites, and it was not neceſſary for every one to marry in his own tribe, as many, even of the Fathers of the church, have thought. This law was peculiar to heireſſes, that inheritances might not be confounded[a].

Numb. xxxvii. 7.

and if there was, the ſimilitude, I think, would have been cloſer, if Moſes had married two wives, for the Jews were the firſt fruits of the goſpel. See Dr. Jortin's *Remarks on Eccleſ. Hiſt.* vol. I. p. 209.

[a] Heireſſes were obliged to marry not only within their own *tribe*, but within their own *family*, Numb. xxxvi. 6. *Let them marry to whom they think beſt, only to the* FAMILY *of the* TRIBE [or HOUSE] *of their fathers ſhall they marry.* And that the Jews ſo underſtood the law, appears from Judith viii. 2. Tobit iii. 15. This I choſe

Beſides, David married Michol the daughter of Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin: and another of his wives was Ahinoam of Jezreel, a city of the tribe of Ephraim.

CHAP. X.

Their marriages and women.

IN the manner that the Iſraelites lived, marriage was no incumbrance to them: it was rather a convenience, as it was deſigned. The women were laborious as well as the men, and wrought in the houſe, whilſt their huſbands were at work in the fields. They dreſſed the victuals, and ſerved them up as appears from Homer and ſeveral paſſages

to obſerve, becauſe a late ingenious writer, who would ſeem to have examined this point, ſaies, *it does not appear that there was any other obligation even upon Heireſſes, than to marry only within their own* TRIBE. Dr. Middleton's reflections on the inconſiſtencies which are found in the four Evangeliſts, in his works 8vo Vol. ii. p. 309. Not only the words of the law, and the practice of the Jews, but Grotius, and the other commentators which he had before him, expreſsly taught him otherwiſe. See likewiſe Kidder's Dem. of the Meſſiah. part ii. p. 416, 17. where the reader, if he pleaſes, may find three or four other of the Doctor's aſſertions fully confuted.

in

in Scripture. When Samuel deſcribes the manners of the kings to the people, he ſays, *your king will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.* The pretence which Amnon the ſon of David made uſe of to get his ſiſter Tamar near him when he debauched her, was that he might eat meat at her hands, which ſhe dreſſed herſelf, notwithſtanding ſhe was a king's daughter.

1 Sam. viii. 13.

2 Sam. xiii. 6.

The women made wearing apparel, and their common employment was weaving ſtuffs, as making cloth and tapeſtry is now. We ſee in Homer the inſtances of Penelope, Calypſo, and Circe. There are examples of it in Theocritus, Terence, and many other authors. But what appears moſt wonderful to me, is that this cuſtom was ſtill retained at Rome, amongſt the greateſt ladies, in a very corrupt age. Since Auguſtus commonly wore cloaths of his wive's, ſiſter's, and daughter's making. For a proof out of Scripture, it is ſaid that Samuel's mother made him a little coat, which ſhe brought him upon feſtival days; and we ſee the virtuous wife in the Proverbs *ſeeking* wool and flax, and laying her hands to the ſpindle, and *

Theoc. Idyll. 15. Ter. Heaut Act ii. Sc. 2. Sueton. Aug. 73.

1 Sam. xi. 19.

Prov. xxxi. 13. and 19.

* Here our author follows the vulgate, which tranſlates Prov. xxx. 21. — *omnes enim domeſtici ejus veſtiti*

giving two ſuits of cloathes to all her ſervants.

All this work is done under ſhelter, and in the houſe, and requires not great ſtrength of body: for which reaſon the ancients did not think them fit employments for men, but left them to the women, as naturally more enclined to ſtay in the houſe, and neater, and fonder of ſuch ſort of things. And this is probably the reaſon why women were generally door-keepers, even to kings. There was only one ſervant-maid at the gate of king Iſhboſheth †, who was buſy in picking corn. And David when he fled before Abſalom,

2 Sam. iv. 5.

ſunt duplicibus; and we, nearer the Hebrew, *for all her houſehold are cloathed with ſcarlet*, and in the Margin, *or double garments*; for שנים ſignifies either, but moſt commonly ſcarlet or crimſon: and if כל ביתה *all her houſehold*, means chiefly *her huſband*, as the Seventy have it, and her children, ſcarlet ſeems moſt ſuitable.

† Et oſtiaria domûs purgans triticum obdormivit, 2 Sam. iv. 5. The reader muſt not expect to find this in our bible, becauſe the Hebrew has it not. The Vulgate took it from the Seventy. However, what our author aſſerts is notorious: for the women ſpoken of Exod. xxxviii. 8. were probably door-keepers, as well as thoſe *who aſſembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation*, 1 Sam. ii. 22. Athenæus ſays the keepers of the king's palace in Perſia, were women, l. xii. Deipnoſ. c. ii. and Chardin ſays it was ſo lately.

left

left ten women, who were his concubines, to keep his palace. The women lived ſeparated from the men, and very retired, eſpecially widows. Judith lived in this manner, ſhut up with her women in an apartment upon the top of the houſe, and ſo did Penelope in Homer. 2 Sam. xv. 16. Judith viii. 5.

The Iſraelites made great feaſts and rejoycings at their weddings. They were ſo dreſt out, that David could find no fitter compariſon, to deſcribe the ſplendour of the ſun by, than that of a bride-groom. The feaſt laſted ſeven days; which we ſee as early as the times of the Patriarchs. When Jacob complained that they had given him Leah for Rachel, Laban ſaid to him, *fulfil the week of the marriage*. Samſon having married a Philiſtine made feaſts for ſeven days, and the ſeventh day the feaſt ended. When young Tobias had a mind to go home, his father-in-law preſſed him to ſtay two weeks, doubling the uſual time, becauſe they were never to ſee one another again. It is the conſtant tradition of the Jews, and their practice is agreeable to it. Whoever thoroughly ſtudies the Gen. xxix. 27. Judg. xiv. 12. &c. Tob. viii. 20. Cod. Talm. Pirke Aboth, cap. xvi.

And *the damſel that kept the door* in the Goſpel, John xviii. 17. every body remembers.

Song

Seld. Uxor Heb. ii. c. 3. Buxtorf. Syn. Jud. c. 28. Song of Sol. v. 1. Jud. xiv. 11. Jeph. iii. 29. Matt. ix. 15. xxv. Iſaiah lxi. 10.

Song of Solomon, will find ſeven days plainly pointed out to repreſent the firſt week of his marriage.

We ſee in the ſame Song, the friends of the bridegroom and the companions of the bride, who were always at the feaſt. He had young men to rejoice with him, and ſhe young women. In the Goſpel, there is mention made of the bridegroom's friends, and of the virgins who went forth to meet the bride and bridegroom. He wore a crown in token of joy, and ſhe too, according to the Jewiſh tradition [a]. They were conducted with inſtruments of muſick, and their company carried branches of myrtle and palm tree in their hands.

Pirke Aboth, c. xix. Selden. c. xv.

As for any thing farther, we do not find that their marriages were attended with any religious ceremony, except the prayers of the father of the family, and the ſtanders by, to beg the bleſſing of God. We have examples of it in the marriage of Rebecca with Iſaac,

Gen. xxiv. 60.

[a] The original is כחתן יכהן פאר literally, *as a bridegroom dreſſeth like a prieſt*, or, *the high prieſt*, that is, magnificently, which the Vulgate tranſlates, *quaſi ſponſum decoratum coronâ*, and the LXX ὡς νυμφίῳ περιέθηκέ μοι μίτραν, and them our author follows according to cuſtom.

of

of Ruth with Boaz, and of Sara with Tobias. Ruth iv. 11. Tob. vii. 13. We do not ſee that there were any ſacrifices offered upon the occaſion, that they went to to the temple, or ſent for the prieſts: all was tranſacted betwixt the relations and friends. So that it was no more than a civil contract.

As to circumciſion it was really a religious act, and abſolutely neceſſary, at that time, for all that would enter into the covenant of Abraham. But yet it was performed in private houſes, without the miniſtry of Prieſts or Levites. If any body of a public character was ſent for, it was a ſort of ſurgeon uſed to the operation, whom they called *Moled:* and ſuch ſort of people the Jews have ſtill. In all theſe ceremonies we muſt take care not to be impoſed upon by modern pictures, as I ſaid about cloaths.

The Iſraelites were ſo far from being afraid of plenty of children, that it was what they wiſhed for. Beſides their natural inclination, they had great motives to it from the law. They knew that God, when he created the world, and repaired it after the deluge, had ſaid, *Increaſe and multiply the earth*; that he had promiſed Abraham a numerous poſterity: in a word, that from among them was to be born the Saviour of the world; we may add

add to this, that they were not influenced by thoſe narrow conſiderations, which make the bleſſing of children, now a days, looked upon as a misfortune.

By reaſon of their frugal way of life, they were at ſmall expence in feeding them whilſt they were little, and leſs in cloathing them, for in thoſe hot countries they often let them go naked; and when they grew up, they helped them in their work, and ſaved the expence of ſlaves or hired ſervants: and indeed they had but few ſlaves in proportion to their work. Ziba, Saul's ſervant, ploughed Mephiboſheth's eſtate with his fifteen ſons and twenty ſervants. They were in no pain about providing for their children, ſince they had no fortunes to raiſe for them: all their ambition was to leave their children the inheritance they had received from their anceſtors, better cultivated, if poſſible, and with a larger ſtock upon it. As for the daughters, they never inherited but in default of male iſſue; they were ſought in marriage more upon account of their families than their riches.

2 Sam. ix. 10.

Numb. xxvii. 8.

It was therefore a convenience, as well as an honour, to have a great many children. He was eſteemed happy, who ſaw himſelf father of a large family, and ſurrounded with a great

Pſalm cxxvii. 3, 4, 5.

a great number of children, and grand-children, always ready to receive his inſtructions and execute his commands; and was under no apprehenſion of having his name forgot whilſt his poſterity ſubſiſted. *Children's children are the crown of old men*, ſays the Scripture; and when it takes notice of the number of children, it is commonly in praiſe of their parents: as thoſe two judges of Iſrael, one of whom had thirty ſons, the other forty, and thirty grand-ſons; as David, nineteen of whoſe ſons are named, beſides thoſe that he had by his concubines; Rehoboam, who had twenty eight ſons and ſixty daughters, and Abia, who had twenty two ſons and ſixteen daughters. In the ſame manner the Poets make mention of the fifty ſons of Priamus; for the Greeks had no leſs eſteem for fruitfulneſs. Virginity, conſidered as a virtue, was at that time little known, and looked upon in the ſame light with ſterility; and the women that died unmarried, were reckoned unfortunate. Electra, in Sophocles, bemoans herſelf expreſly upon it, and this was the occaſion of the repining of Jephtha's daughter. Hence, barreneſs came to be a reproach to married women, as we ſee by Samuel's mother and

Prov. xvii. 6.

Judg. x. 4. and xii. 14.

1 Chron. iii. 1, &c. 2 Chron. xi. 21. Ib. xiii. 21.

Judg. xi. 31.

many

1 Sam. i. many others. This misfortune was looked upon as a curſe from God.

This care for poſterity was the foundation of the law that enjoined a man to marry his brother's widow, when he died without children. A law, exiſting in the Patriarchs times, Gen. xxxviii. 8. as appears by the ſtory of Tamar, and looked upon as a duty, that the name of the deceaſed might not be forgot: and ſo the children were reckoned his by a ſort of adoption. From hence proceed the two genealogies of Jeſus Matt. i. Luke iii. Chriſt; one, according to St. Matthew; and the other according to St. Luke. For thus it was found, that Joſeph had two fathers, one by whom he was begot, and the other by legal adoption. Beſides, the marrying a ſiſter-in-law was not contrary to the firſt law of nature, which allowed marrying even one's own ſiſter before God forbad it.

It was the deſire of having a great number of children, that induced the Iſraelites to take ſeveral wives at a time: which they eſteemed an honour, and ſign of dignity. It is thus Iv. 1. that Iſaiah, to ſhew how much valued thoſe of God's people ſhould be, whom he ſhould preſerve, ſays, that *ſeven women ſhall take hold of one man*, offering to live at their own expence, provided they had the honour to be called

called by his name. Thus it is likewiſe ſaid, that Rehoboam had eighteen wives and three-ſcore concubines, and that he gave many wives to his ſon Abia, whom he choſe for his ſucceſſor. 2 Chron. xi. 21, 23.

They were yet very ſparing in the uſe of marriage; they did not only abſtain from it, whilſt their wives were big with child, and otherwiſe indiſpoſed, but all the time they were nurſes, for two or three years together: and mothers did not often diſpenſe with themſelves from giving ſuck to their own children. We find but three nurſes mentioned in the Scripture, that is, Rebecca's, Mephiboſheth's, and ſhe that nurſed Joaſh king of Judah. Gen. xxiv. 59. 2 Sam. iv. 4. 2 Kings xi. 2.

We ought not then to wonder that God tolerated polygamy, which was introduced before the deluge, though it was contrary to the firſt inſtitution of marriage. For when it was inſtituted in the terreſtrial paradiſe, there was yet no concupiſcence. Polygamy then was like divorces, which Jeſus Chriſt told the Jews had never been allowed them but for the hardneſs of their hearts. Beſides wives, they had likewiſe concubines, who were commonly ſlaves; lawful wives had no other advantage over them, than the honour of having Gen. iv. 19. Matt. xix. 8.

ing their children preferred to the inheritance. So that the name of concubinage had no ill ſignification, as with us. It was only a leſs ſolemn wedding.

This liberty, beſides, was very far from rendering the ſtate of matrimony more convenient; it made the yoke of it much heavier. A huſband could not ſo equally divide his heart amongſt many wives, as to pleaſe them all: which obliged him to govern them in an abſolute manner, as the eaſtern people ſtill do. So that there was no longer any equality, friendſhip, or ſociety in marriage. It was ſtill harder for the rival wives to agree amongſt themſelves: there was no end of diviſions, cabals, and domeſtick quarrels. All the children of one wife had ſo many mothers-in-law, as their father had more wives: each eſpouſed the intereſt of it's own mother, and looked upon the children of the other wives as ſtrangers or enemies. From hence comes the way of ſpeaking ſo common in Scripture, *it is my brother and the ſon of my mother*. We ſee examples of theſe diviſions in the family of David, and ſtill worſe in that of Herod.

The liberty of being ſet looſe by divorce, had alſo very bad conſequences. People engaged themſelves more unwarily, and took

leſs pains to pleaſe one another; and a man had it in his power to have ſo many wives, that it was no better than an excuſe for debauchery. We know the diſorder there was at Rome, after the decay of the commonwealth; whereas, whilſt good manners ſubſiſted there, that is, 'till the year 553 from the foundation, there was no ſuch thing as a divorce heard of, tho' it was permitted by the laws. The children ſuffered very much by it too: they were orphans, even whilſt their father and mother were living, and could ſcarce avoid being hated by one of them, and ſiding with one or the other. Gellius iv. c. 3.

CHAP. XI.

The education of their children, their exerciſes and ſtudies.

THE education of children ſeems to have been very nearly the ſame amongſt the Iſraelites, as that of the Egyptians, and moſt antient Greeks. They formed their body by labour and exerciſe, and their mind by letters and muſick. Strength of body was greatly eſteemed; and it is that for which ſoldiers are moſtly commended in Scripture, as David's valiant men are. Foot-racing muſt Plato Rep. 2, 3. 2 Chron. vii. 2.

have been one of their chief exerciſes, ſince men were known by their running at a diſtance, as thoſe who brought the news of Abſalom's defeat: they muſt needs have ſeen them run often. It is alſo ſaid of Aſahel, Joab's brother, that he was as light of foot as a wild roe. Zechariah ſpeaks of *a burdenſome ſtone*, which St. Jerom takes for one of thoſe ſtones which ſerved to try men's ſtrength by ſeeing who could lift it higheſt. For which reaſon one may imagine they had that ſort of exerciſe. The example of Jonathan ſhews they uſed to exerciſe themſelves in ſhooting with the bow.

2 Sam. xviii. 27.
Ib. ii. 18.
Zech. xii. 3.
St. Jerom: in locum.
1 Sam. xx. 20.

But they did not make the exerciſe of the body their main buſineſs, like the Greeks, who reduced it to a profeſſion, and ſtudied the greateſt improvements in it. They called called this art *gymnaſtick*, becauſe they exerciſed themſelves naked, and the ſchools *gymnaſia*, which were ſpacious, magnificent, and built at a great expence. There the beſt maſters, with many aſſiſtants under them, formed the bodies of young people by a very exact diſcipline and regular exerciſe. Some took ſuch delight in it, that they practiſed nothing elſe all their lives, and were wreſtlers, &c. by profeſſion. By this means they acquired

quired prodigious ſtrength, and brought their bodies into ſuch exact ſhape, that they ſerved as models for the fineſt ſtatues. But in other reſpects it made them brutal, and incapable of any application of mind; nor were they even fit for war, or any ſort of enterpriſe that deprived them of their uſual diet or reſt, or put them at all out of their regular way of living. The Hebrews were too ſerious to give into theſe niceties; and it was an odious novelty to them when there was an academy built at Jeruſalem, under Antiochus Epiphanes, after the Greek faſhion. They were content with field labour, and ſome military exerciſes, as were the Romans.

1 Macc. i. 14. 2 Macc. iv. 12.

Nor had they occaſion for hard ſtudy to improve their mind, if by ſtudy we underſtand the knowledge of ſeveral languages, and reading many books, as we commonly mean by it. For they deſpiſed learning foreign languages, becauſe that was as much in the power of ſlaves as thoſe of higher rank. Their native language was ſufficient for them, that is, the Hebrew, in which the Scripture is written. It has a reſemblance of their manners, the words of it are plain, all derived from few roots, and uncompounded: it has a wonderful luxuriance in it's verbs, moſt of

Joſeph. xx. in fine.

which expreſs whole phraſes. *To be great, to make great, to be made great*, are all ſimple words, which no tranſlation can fully expreſs. Moſt of the prepoſitions and pronouns are no more than ſingle letters added to the beginning or end of other words. It is the moſt conciſe language we know, and conſequently comes neareſt to the converſe of ſpirits, who have little need of words to make themſelves underſtood: the expreſſions are clear and weighty, they convey diſtinct and ſenſible ideas, and the fartheſt from bombaſt of all others.

The genius of this language is to make one propoſition follow another, without ſuſpending the ſenſe, or perplexing us with long periods, which makes the ſtyle extremely clear. From thence it comes, that in their narrations, thoſe that are concerned in them, ſpeak with the utmoſt plainneſs, and in their own perſons, and do not ſcruple to uſe repetitions. They almoſt conſtantly relate the ſame thing in the ſame words. And this is what makes us, at firſt, think the Scripture ſtyle flat and heavy; but it is in reality a mark of good ſenſe, ſolidity, and a clear head in thoſe who ſpake in that manner. Though the ſtyle of the ſacred books is very different, we

do not find that the language altered from the time of Moſes to the Babyloniſh captivity.

All their grammar then conſiſted, like that of the moſt antient Greeks, in ſpeaking their own language well; writing, and reading it correctly, with this difference, that it does not appear they had reduced it into an art, and learnt it by rules. Their letters were thoſe which we call at preſent Samaritan, becauſe the Samaritans have preſerved them: and as they do not run well, nor are eaſy to ſhape, it may reaſonably be doubted, whether it was very common amongſt the Iſraelites to know how to write: and the rather, as learned men are called in Scripture *Sopherim*, that is to ſay, Scribes, according to the old tranſlations. Labouring people, too, have much leſs occaſion for writing, than merchants and men of buſineſs. But it is probable, that moſt of them knew how to read; ſince it was recommended to all to learn the law of God, and meditate upon it day and night: and this ſtudy was their whole employment upon the Sabbath days.

Deut. vi. 6, 7, &c. Joſeph. cont. App. i. 6. Orig. cont. Celſ. lib. iv.

This book alone was ſufficient to inſtruct them thoroughly, they ſaw in it the hiſtory of the world, till their ſettlement in the pro-

miſed land, the riſe of all the nations which they knew, and more eſpecially of thoſe they were moſt concerned to be beſt acquainted with, the deſcendants of Lot, Abraham, Iſhmael, and Eſau. There they ſaw the whole of their religion, its doctrines, ceremonies, and moral precepts, and there they found their civil laws. This volume alone, which is the pentateuch or five books of Moſes, contained all that they were obliged to know. Not becauſe they had not many other books: for, to omit thoſe of Joſhua, Judges, Samuel, and ſeveral that were written after; in the time of Moſes, *the book of the wars of the Lord* is mentioned, and in other places *the* * *book of*

Num. xxi. 14.
Joſh. x. 13. and 2 Sam. i. 18.

* Our author calls it *Livre des juſtes*, after the vulgate: but the Chaldee paraphraſt, *The book of the law*: the Syriac, *The book of canticles* in one place, and *The book of Aſhir* in the other. Now it may be doubted whether any of theſe come up to the original ספר הישר that is literally, *The book which is right*, as the Seventy ſeem to have underſtood it by tranſlating it ἐπὶ τῆ βιβλίῳ τῆ εὐθῆς. The ſacred writer appeals to the authentick copy of Joſhua and Samuel that was preſerved by the high prieſt, as the law, Deut. xxxi. 26. and xvii. 18, it may be, in the tabernacle or the temple, for Joſephus, when he mentions the ſun's ſtanding ſtill, Ant. l. v. cap. 2. ſays, δηλῶται διὰ τῶν ἀναγεγραμμένων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ γραμμάτων. Let the learned judge.

Jaſher,

Jaſher, the books of kings, often refer to the chronicles of the kings of Judah and Iſrael. Solomon wrote three thouſand parables and one thouſand and five ſongs: he wrote treatiſes upon all ſorts of plants and animals, and he himſelf complains that *of making books there is no end.* All theſe, and perhaps many others that we never heard of, are loſt; as thoſe of the Egyptians, Syrians, and other eaſtern people. The only books that remain of ſo great antiquity, are ſuch as God dictated to his prophets, and has preſerved by a particular providence.

1 Kings iv. 32, 33.

Eccles. xii. 12.

It is not at all likely that the Iſraelites ſtudied the books of foreigners, from whom they were ſo careful to ſeparate themſelves. And this ſtudy might have been dangerous; ſince it would have taught them the impious and extravagant fables of which the theology of idolaters was compoſed. But they abhorred it to that degree that they would not ſo much as pronounce the name of falſe Gods, and, if they made part of any proper names, they changed them. Thus they ſaid Iſhboſheth and Mephiboſheth, for Eſhbaal and Meribbaal; Bethhaven for Bethel; and Beelzebub inſtead of Beelſemen. Theſe fables, which comprehend the whole doctrine of falſe religions,

Pſal. xvi. 4. Wiſdom. xiv. 27.

1 Chron. viii. 33, 34.

gions, were a heap of lies eſtabliſhed by long tradition upon the foundations of ancient truths, and embelliſhed by the invention of poets: mothers and nurſes taught them to their children from their cradle, and ſang them at their religious worſhip and feaſts. The wiſeſt of the heathens ſaw plainly that they tended only to create a contempt of the divinity, and corruption of manners: but the evil was paſt remedy.

Plato Rep. ii. in fine & init. iii.

The Iſraelites were the only people that related truths to their children, capable of inſpiring them with the fear and love of God, and exciting them to virtue. All their traditions were noble and uſeful. Not but they made uſe of parables and riddles, beſides ſimple narrations, to teach truths of great importance, eſpecially to morality. It was a practice amongſt the ingenious to propound riddles to one another, as we ſee by the inſtances of Samſon, and the queen of Sheba. The Greeks tell us the ſame thing of their firſt ſages. They made uſe too of theſe fables, as Eſop did, the fiction of which is ſo plain that it can impoſe upon no body. We have two of them in Scripture, Jotham's the ſon of Gideon, and that of Joaſh king of Iſrael. But the chief uſe of allegories and a figurative

Judg. xiv. 14. 1 Kings x. 1. Plutarch. Comm. Sept. Sap. Judg ix. 8. 2 Kings xiv. 9.

way

way of ſpeaking was to comprehend the maxims of morality in few words and under agreeable images, that children might learn them more eaſily; and ſuch are the parables or proverbs, of which the ſapiential books of ſcripture are a collection.

Theſe parables are commonly expreſſed in verſe, and the verſes were made to be ſung; for which reaſon, I believe, the Iſraelites learnt muſick too. I judge of them by the Greeks, who had all their learning and politeneſs from the eaſtern people. Now it is certain that the Greeks taught their children both to ſing and play upon inſtruments. This ſtudy is the moſt ancient of all others. Before the uſe of letters the memory of great actions was preſerved by ſongs. The Gauls and Germans retained the ſame cuſtom in the times of the Romans, and it is well preſerved amongſt the people of America.

Though the Hebrews had letters, they knew that words in meaſure and ſet to a tune were always beſt remembered, and from thence proceeded that great care which they always took to compoſe ſongs upon any important event that had happened to them. Such are thoſe two ſongs of Moſes, one at paſſing through the Red ſea, the other when he Exod. xv.

died,

Deut. xxxii. Judg. v. 1 Sam. ii. died, to recommend the obſervation of the law. Such likewiſe is that of Deborah, that of Samuel's mother, and many others: but, above all, the Pſalms of David. Theſe poems are wonderfully inſtructive, full of the praiſes of God, the remembrance of his loving kindneſs, beſides moral precepts, and ſuch ſentiments as a good man ought to have in every ſtation of life. Thus, the moſt important truths, and exalted notions were agreeably inſtilled into the minds of children by poetry ſet to muſick.

And that was the right uſe of them. God, who created great genius's and fine voices, deſigned, without doubt, that the owners ſhould employ them to recommend virtue, and not to foment criminal paſſions. The Greeks themſelves own, that the moſt antient and beſt ſort of poetry was the lyrick, that is to ſay, hymns and odes in praiſe of the Deity, and to inſpire virtue. Dramatick poetry, which conſiſts only in imitation, and aims at nothing but to divert by moving the paſſions, was of later invention. We ſee nothing of it amongſt the Hebrews; and though Solomon in his Song makes different perſons ſpeak, it is more to expreſs their ſentiments in a lively manner,

Plato leg. vii.

than

than to repreſent an action, as is done in theatrical performances.

There are no remains of the Hebrew muſick, nor of the ſtructure of their verſe: but if we may judge of the beauty of their ſongs by that of the words, they muſt have been excellent; grave and ſerious, but affecting and diverſified. And if we may form an opinion of them from their effects, the Scripture ſeems to impute ſupernatural ones to them. We ſee their muſick charmed evil ſpirits, by the inſtance of Saul, who found himſelf well and refreſhed when David played upon the harp. The ſound of their inſtruments, likewiſe, encouraged the ſpirit of God, which ſpake by the prophets, as we find by the example of thoſe whom Saul met, as Samuel had foretold, and with whom he himſelf entered into holy tranſports of joy; and by that of Eliſha, who aſked for a player upon a minſtrel that he might propheſy. That is, this muſick appeaſed the motion of the ſpirits and humours which the devil had troubled in thoſe whom God had permitted him to act upon: and ſuch hearts as it found quiet and pure, it lifted up to God, and warmed them, and ſo diſpoſed them to receive the powerful impreſſions of his ſpirit the more effectually.

1 Sam. xvi. 23.

Ibid. x. 5.

2 Kings iii. 15.

The

The Greeks tell us of the wonderful effects of their muſick to excite or calm the paſſions, and, unleſs we contradict all hiſtory, it muſt be owned that the muſick of the antients was more affecting than ours.

Not that it was an uncommon thing amongſt them, for they were all muſicians: and, to confine myſelf to the Hebrews, and ſpeak only of ſuch as were profeſſed muſicians, there were in David's time four thouſand Levites appointed for that purpoſe only, under the direction of two hundred and eighty eight maſters, the chief of whom were Aſaph, Heman, Idithun, ſo often named in the titles of the Pſalms. David himſelf was a great poet, and excellent muſician; and it is very well known how much the inclination of kings conduces to the improvement of arts. They had great variety of wind inſtruments, as trumpets, and flutes of different ſorts; drums, and inſtruments with ſtrings. The two that are moſt frequently mentioned, are *canour* and *nabel*, which the Greeks have changed into *cinyra* and *nabla*. So that when we repreſent David with a harp, it is only by gueſs. They had inſtruments of eight and ten ſtrings.

1 Chron. xxiii. 5. Ibid xxv. 7.

Their ſinging was accompanied with dancing; for that is the meaning of the word,

choræa

chorea or *choir*, which the Latins have taken from the Greeks, and which ſignified with them, a company of dancers cloathed and decked out in the ſame manner. They ſang together, and danced in a ring, being ſorted according to their age and ſex, young men and maids, old men and wives, without mixing one with the other. Now, it is not to be ſuppoſed that the Hebrew dances were leſs modeſt.—Choirs are mentioned at the proceſſion which David made to carry the ark into Sion, and upon occaſion of ſeveral victories, where it is ſaid that the maidens came out of the cities dancing and ſinging. 2 Sam. vi. 5, 14, 15.

I do not perceive that the Iſraelites had any publick ſchools, or that the young men went from their father's houſe to ſtudy. Their laborious way of living did not admit of it. Their fathers had occaſion for their aſſiſtance in their work, and brought them up to it from their childhood. So the word *ſchool*, in Greek, ſignifies *leiſure*, as being the place where ſuch people met, who, having no urgent buſineſs, endeavoured to amuſe themſelves in an innocent manner: and the Latin word *ludens*, which ſignifies *play*, conveys the ſame idea. I imagine, then, that their learning was chiefly acquired from the converſation of their

their fathers and old men, without much reading or regular leſſons.

Fathers were obliged to inform their children of the great things God had done for them and their fathers: and upon that account, the law commanded them ſo often to explain the reaſons of their feaſts and other religious ceremonies. Theſe inſtructions, thus joined to ſenſible objects, and ſo frequently repeated, could not fail of having their due weight. They taught them, beſides, every thing relating to huſbandry, adding continual practice to their leſſons. And we cannot doubt of their being very expert in it, conſidering that for ſo many ages it was their ſole employment. Now, though this art be followed amongſt us, by dull people, that ſeldom reflect upon any thing, it nevertheleſs contains a great extent of knowledge, much more uſeful to mankind than that ſpeculative ſort which is reckoned *learning*. And though we were to allow nothing to be ſcience, but what we find in books, both the antients and moderns have written ſufficient on this ſubject to recommend it to our eſteem.

Deut. vi. 7, 20.

An Iſraelite, therefore, who, by the tradition of his fathers, by his own experience, and ſome reading, was inſtructed in his religion,

gion; the laws that he was to regulate his life by, and the hiſtory of his own nation, who knew how to provide himſelf with all the neceſſaries of life, who thoroughly underſtood the nature of different ſoils, and the plants that are proper for them, the method and time to be obſerved in planting them, what precautions are to be taken againſt the ſeveral accidents that deſtroy the fruits of the earth, how they are to be gathered and preſerved; who underſtood the nature of cattle, how they are to be fed, the diſtempers they are liable to, with the cure of them, and many other things of the ſame kind, which moſt of thoſe that reckon themſelves men of breeding and letters know nothing of: this honeſt Iſraelite, methinks, would be full as valuable a man, as one bred in our inns-of-court, exchequer, or in the wrangle of the ſchools. For it muſt be owned, that in theſe later ages curious ſtudies have been too far divided from thoſe that are uſeful, the cultivation of the mind, and the improvement of the manners, from a due regard to one's buſineſs and health. Moſt of thoſe who are ſo ſollicitous about their intellects, take too little care of their perſons, and become unfit for action and bodily labour. Nay, many grow ſo effeminate,

by

by giving themſelves up to muſick, poetry, and other ſtudies of a curious nature, that, with a very high opinion of their fine genius and pretended merit, they lead an unactive and deſpicable life.

There were however ſome Iſraelites that applied themſelves particularly to ſtudy, and may be called learned men, according to our own ideas. It is ſaid, that in David's time there were *men in the tribe of Iſſachar who had underſtanding of the times to know what Iſrael ought to do.* And commentators ſay that they obſerved the ſtars, to regulate the feaſts and the whole courſe of the year by them. The prophet Malachy ſays of prieſts in general, that *their lips ſhould keep knowledge, and that they ſhould ſeek the law at their mouth.* One of their chief functions therefore was to teach the law of God in the meetings which were held in every city on the ſabbath-day, and which the Greeks called *ſynagogues* or *churches*, for both words ſignify almoſt the ſame thing. Other learned men were appointed to ſpeak there too, eſpecially ſuch as were acknowledged to be prophets, inſpired by God. Theſe were the public ſchools of the Iſraelites, where they did not teach curious knowledge, but religion and good manners; where they did

1 Chron. xii. 32.

Malach. ii. 7.

Orig. cont. Celſ. l. iv.

did not inſtruct children only, and ſome particular perſons who had nothing elſe to do, but the people in general.

None but the prieſts and prophets undertook to compoſe, eſpecially hiſtory. It was the ſame in Egypt. Their prieſts renounced all worldly affairs. They led a very ſerious and retired life, wholly employed in the ſervice of the Gods, and the ſtudy of wiſdom. They ſpent the day in the offices of religion, and the night in mathematical contemplations, for ſo they called the ſtudy of the heavens. None but they wrote hiſtory. So the moſt antient Roman hiſtories were the annals of their high-prieſts. Joſeph. cont. App. i. c. 2.

We ſee in Scripture-hiſtory the character of their authors. It appears that they were very ſerious and very wiſe men; old and of great experience, and well informed of what paſſed. There is neither vanity, nor flattery, nor affectation in them to ſhew their wit: whereas all theſe foibles are to be diſcovered in the Greeks, every one of whom had liberty to write, and moſt of them aimed at nothing but their own glory or that of their nation. The Hebrew hiſtorians do not ſet down their their own names, nor do they ever conceal any circumſtance that appears diſadvantageous

to themſelves, or their ſovereigns. They that wrote the hiſtory of David have been as particular in the account of his great crime as in any other of his actions.

They make neither preface nor tranſition, they only relate facts in as clear a manner as poſſible, without any mixture of reaſoning or reflexions. But if we examine well, we ſhall find that they choſe the facts, which are proper for their purpoſe, with wonderful judgment, and this makes their ſtories very ſhort; though, upon important occaſions, they enter into the moſt exact detail, and ſet the action before the reader's eyes in very lively colours. It is plain they leave out reflexions and exaggerations on purpoſe, by their knowing ſo well how to apply them in diſcourſes where they have a mind to work upon the paſſions. So Moſes, in Deuteronomy, makes uſe of the ſtrongeſt and moſt expreſſive figures to magnify and expatiate upon what he had only plainly related in the preceding books. Thus the prophet Iſaiah barely relates the defeat of Senacherib after having exaggerated, when he foretold it, in a ſtyle that is really poetical.

Iſaiah xxxvi.

The Hebrews were not leſs to be admired in all their other ways of writing. Their

laws

laws are written with clearneſs and brevity. Their maxims of morality are contained in ſhort ſentences, adorned with agreeable figures, and expreſſed in a conciſe ſtyle; for all this ſerves to make them remembered. In fine, the poetry is ſublime, the deſcriptions lively, the metaphors bold, the expreſſions noble, and the figures wonderfully varied. But it would require whole books to treat of their eloquence and poetry in ſuch a manner as they deſerve.

Though they wrote by divine inſpiration, I do not think it neceſſary to impute all their eloquence to it. They were only inſpired to ſpeak truth, and to make uſe of no word that was unfit to declare the myſterious deſigns of God: but for any thing more, the Holy Ghoſt made uſe of their natural manner of expreſſion. This is plain from the different ſtyles of the prophets, and ſtill more ſo from the likeneſs they all bear to the moſt antient profane writers. Homer, Herodotus, and Hippocrates, tell a ſtory in the ſame way. Heſiod's inſtructions are written in the like manner. The elegies of Theognis and Solon reſemble the exhortations of Moſes and the prophets. We ſee in Pindar and the Chorus's of Tragedians great boldneſs and variety of

Demoſth. de falſ. leg. & alibi.

poetry; and the more antient Greek authors are, the more they reſemble the Hebrews, both in the diſtinction of ſtyle, according to the nature of the work, and in their conciſeneſs and propriety of expreſſion.

People may imagine that the Hebrews wrote in this manner by the pure ſtrength of their genius, and that the goodneſs of their judgment prompted them to reject what was not ſuitable to the deſign of any work, and to make uſe of what was fitteſt to inſtruct or affect. For my own part, when I ſee that they never fail to obſerve a difference of ſtyle, and that they apply all the ornaments of true eloquence ſo properly, I am rather inclined to believe they had already ſome rules, taken from the experience of their fathers, either in writing or by tradition amongſt the learned. We muſt not imagine that the Greeks invented eloquence and poetry: the greateſt ſhare they had in it was giving names to the figures, and framing all that artificial language, in which the knowledge of grammarians and rhetoricians conſiſted; but which alone never made either orators or poets. The rudiments of the art were diſcovered long before. For the world was not young at that time: It had exiſted three thouſand years before

before Solomon, and more than three hundred ſince. Till then, men's lives were long, and there had been no inundations of Barbarians in the countries where arts and ſciences had their origin.

CHAP. XII.

The politeneſs of the Iſraelites.

TO return to the common ſort of the Hebrews. Since they were ſo well inſtructed and born in a country where people are naturally ingenious, they could not fail of being polite: For we are not to ſuppoſe that inconſiſtent with a country life and bodily labour. The example of the Greeks plainly proves the contrary. I mean by politeneſs here, in general, whatſoever diſtinguiſhes us from barbarous nations: on one ſide humanity and civility, demonſtrations of friendſhip and reſpect in the common tranſactions of life: and on the other, prudence in buſineſs, addreſs, and propriety of behaviour, and all that comes under the denomination of good conduct.

As to civility, the Greeks, living for the moſt part, in commonwealths, were ſo jealous of their liberty that they treated one an-

other as equals, and their compliments went no farther than ſhewing eſteem and friendſhip, in which the Romans imitated them. The civilities of the eaſtern people came nearer to ours and were more reſpectful. They called thoſe *Lords*, whom they had a mind to honour, made vows of obedience to them, and bowed themſelves to the earth before them, which the Scripture calls *adoring*.

The Hebrews did ſo even before they had kings, as early as the time of the patriarchs: which proceeded, in all likelihood, from the cuſtoms of the neighbouring people, who had long been ſubject to maſters. It was not reckoned ill manners to *thou* each other; all the antients ſpoke in that manner, and moſt nations ſtill do. It was not till about the decay of the Roman empire that the plural began to be uſed in ſpeaking to one perſon. It was uſual to kiſs in ſaluting: and inſtead of uncovering, as we do out of reſpect, they pulled off their ſhoes when they went into ſacred places, as the eaſtern nations do to this day. Uncovering the head was a ſign of mourning.

Ruth ii. 10, 13.
1 Sam. xxv. 23, 41.
2 Sam. xiv. 4, 9, 17.
Judith xi. 5, 6.

We ſee examples of their compliments in thoſe of Ruth, Abigail, the woman of Tekoah, whom Joab employed to get Abſalom recalled, and Judith. All theſe are exemples of

of women, who are generally more complaiſant than men. They liked to ſpeak in parables and ingenious riddles. Their language was modeſt and chaſte, but in a different way from ours. They ſaid *the water of the feet*, for urine; and *to cover the feet*, for eaſing nature; becauſe in that action they covered themſelves with their mantle, after they had dug a hole in the ground. They ſaid *the thigh*, when they meant the parts which modeſty forbids to name. In other reſpects they have expreſſions that ſeem very harſh to us, as when they ſpeak of conception and the birth of children, of women that are fruitful or barren, and make no ſcruple of naming ſome infirmities of both ſexes which we make uſe of circumlocution to expreſs. Deut. xxiii. 13.

All theſe differences proceed only from diſtance of time and place. Moſt of the words, which are now immodeſt according to the preſent uſe of our language, were not ſo formerly, becauſe they conveyed other ideas; and the eaſtern people, eſpecially the Mahometans, are ridiculouſly nice about certain indecencies that have no influence upon the manners, whilſt they give themſelves great liberty in the moſt infamous pleaſures. The Scripture ſpeaks more plainly than we ſhould

do of conjugal affairs, becauſe there was not one Iſraelite that renounced marriage, and they that wrote were grave and commonly old men.

As for prudence, good or bad conduct, addreſs, complaiſance, artifice, and court intrigues, the hiſtory of Saul and David furniſhes us with as many examples of them as any other that I know of.

CHAP. XIII.

Their pleaſures.

THEIR eaſy and quiet life added to the beauty of the country inclined them to pleaſures. But ſuch as was ſenſible and eaſy to procure. They had ſcarce any but muſic and good cheer. Their feaſts were, as I ſaid, made of plain meat, which they had out of their own ſtock: and their muſic coſt them ſtill leſs, ſince moſt people knew how to ſing and play upon ſome inſtrument. Old Barzillai names only theſe two pleaſures, when he was too far advanced in years to reliſh life. The author of Eccleſiaſticus compares *a concert of muſic in a banquet of wine to a ſignet of carbuncle ſet in gold.* So Ulyſſes frankly owned to the Phæacians that he knew

2 Sam. xix. 15.

Ecclus xxxii. 5.

knew no greater happineſs than a feaſt accompanied with muſic. We ſee the ſame pleaſures mentioned in the paſſages of Scripture, where the prophets reproach thoſe that abuſed them, but they added exceſs of wine, crowns and flowers, and perfumes, as we ſee the Greeks and Romans did. Amos vi. 6. Iſaiah v. 11, 12. Ibid. xxviii. 3.

We have a catalogue of the perfumes which the Hebrews made uſe of in the Song of Solomon and many other places of Scripture, but eſpecially in the law, where it preſcribes the compoſition of two ſorts that were to be offered to God, the one wet and the other dry. The drugs there named for making them are the moſt odoriferous that were known, before muſk and ambergriſe were found out. Exod. xxx. 23, &c.

They loved eating in gardens under arbours and ſhady places, for it is natural in hot countries to ſeek coolneſs and freſh air. So, when the Scripture deſcribes a time of proſperity, it ſays that every one ate and drank under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, which fruit-trees have the broadeſt leaves.

Their employment in country labour did not allow of their feaſting or following their diverſions every day, as moſt of the rich

do now, but it ſerved to make them reliſh their pleaſures better. They had therefore ſtated times of rojoicing, ſabbath-days, and all other feaſts taken notice of in the law, weddings, dividing the ſpoil after victory, ſheep-ſhearing, harveſt and vintage in each particular eſtate, where the neighbours came together to aſſiſt each other. It is well known that the feaſts of Bacchus and Ceres had their riſe amongſt the Greeks from ſuch rejoicings, and we ſtill ſee ſome footſteps of it amongſt the country people. The Iſraelites had no prophane ſhews. They were contented with the ceremonies of religion and the pomp of ſacrifices, which muſt needs have been very great, ſince the temple was the moſt magnificent building in the whole country, and there were thirty-two thouſand Levites appointed for it's ſervice.

Iſaiah ix. 3.

Ibid. xvi. 9, 10.

I do not perceive that they had either gaming or hunting, which are reckoned with us amongſt the higheſt diverſions. As to gaming, it ſeems as if they were entirely ignorant of it, ſince we do not ſo much as once find the name of it in the whole Scripture. Not but the people of Lydia had already invented games, if what is ſaid of them be true. But to this day the Arabians and ſome other eaſtern

Herod. ii.

nations

nations play at no games of hazard, at leaſt if they obſerve their law. As to hunting, either beaſts or birds, it was not unknown to the Iſraelites; but it looks as if they followed it rather for furniſhing their tables and preſerving their corn and vines than for pleaſure. For they often ſpeak of nets and ſnares, but we do not find that even their kings had either dogs or any hunting equipage. It would no doubt have made them odious to have hunted over ploughed lands, or bred beaſts to do miſchief. Hunting prevails chiefly in the vaſt foreſts and untilled lands of cold countries.

CHAP. XIV.

Their mourning.

AFTER rejoicings let us ſpeak of their mourning and ſigns of affliction. The antients did not only go into mourning upon the death of relations, but as often as any misfortune happened to them: and it did not conſiſt merely in changing dreſs. The cauſes of it were either public calamities, as a mortality, a general ſcarcity, an invaſion; or private misfortunes, as the death of a relation or friend, if he was dangerouſly ill or taken captive, or if one was accuſed of a crime.

The

1 Kings xxi. 27. The ſigns of mourning amongſt the Iſraelites were tearing their cloaths as ſoon as they heard any ill news, or if they happened to be preſent at committing any great wickedneſs, as blaſphemy, or any other ſin againſt God; to beat their breaſt, to put their hands upon their head, uncover it, and throw duſt or aſhes upon it, inſtead of perfumes, which they uſed in the times of joy, to ſhave the beard and hair off. On the contrary, the Romans, who uſed to ſhave, let their hair grow in the time of mourning.

Jerem. ii. 37.

As long as the mourning laſted, they were neither to anoint nor waſh themſelves, but wear their cloaths dirty and torn, or elſe put on ſack-cloth, which was a ſtrait garment without folds, and conſequently was very uneaſy; they called it alſo hair-cloth, becauſe the ſtuff mas made of camels hair, or ſomething elſe that was as rough and coarſe. They bared the feet as well as head, but had their face covered. Sometimes they wrapped themſelves up in a mantle that they might not ſee light, and to hide their tears. They faſted at the ſame time that they mourned, that is, as long as they were in mourning, they either ate nothing at all, or not till after ſun-ſet, and then only plain food,

Ezek. xxiv. 17.

as

as bread, or herbs, and drank nothing but water.

They continued ſhut up, ſitting upon the ground, or lying in the aſhes, keeping a profound ſilence, and not ſpeaking but to bemoan themſelves or ſing ſome dolefull ſong. Mourning for a dead perſon commonly laſted ſeven days; ſometimes they continued it a month, as for Aaron and Moſes; and ſometimes ſeventy days, as they did for the patriarch Jacob. But ſome widows mourned their whole lives, as Judith and Anna the propheteſs. Lament. ii. 10. 1 Sam. xxxi 13. Num. xx. 29. Deut. xxxiv. 8. Gen. l. 3.

Thus their mourning was not, like ours, a mere ceremony, in which the rich only obſerve ſome ſet forms. It was attended with all the natural conſequences of real grief: for a perſon in affliction takes no care of his dreſs or keeping himſelf clean; he can hardly reſolve to eat, he ſpeaks not, or, if he does, it is only to bewail himſelf, he goes not abroad, and avoids all diverſions. The Iſraelites were not the only people that mourned after this manner; the Greeks and Romans did ſo long after; ſince St. Chryſoſtom deſcribes it to be pretty much the ſame in his time. I do not doubt but ſome acted a part, and did all that I mentioned, without being in any great concern; thoſe however that were in De comp.

earneſt

earneſt were at liberty, if they pleaſed, to indulge themſelves in it.

But in general both the Iſraelites and all the antients followed nature more than we, and were under leſs conſtraint in venting their paſſions. They ſang and danced, when they were pleaſed; and wept and cried aloud, when they were grieved. When they were afraid, they owned it frankly; and in their anger they abuſed one another heartily. Homer and the tragic Poets furniſh us with examples in every page. See what affliction Achilles is in for the death of Patroclus, and in Sophocles the bitter lamentations of Oedipus and Philoctetes. Philoſophy and chriſtianity have now corrected the outward behaviour in thoſe that are well bred, and have had a good education. They are taught to ſpeak like heroes or ſaints, though moſt are not at all better at the bottom, and are contented to diſguiſe their paſſions without conquering, or even ſtriving againſt, them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Their funerals.

THEIR funerals will fall in pretty well here with their mourning. The antients in general took great care about them, and looked upon it as a terrible misfortune that their bodies, or thoſe of their friends, ſhould lie expoſed to be torn by wild beaſts and birds, or to putrify above ground and infect the living. It was a conſolation to reſt in the ſepulchre of their fathers; inſtead of burning the bodies, as the Greeks did, to preſerve the aſhes, the Hebrews buried the common ſort of people, and embalmed perſons of diſtinction to lay them in ſepulchres. They alſo ſometimes burnt perfumes over the corpſe. At the funeral of Aſa, king of Judah, it is ſaid, *they laid him on a bed which was filled with ſweet odours and divers kinds of ſpices prepared by the apothecaries art, and they made a very great burning for him*; and that it was cuſtomary, appears from other paſſages. They embalmed almoſt in the ſame manner as the Egyptians, wrapping the corpſe in a great quantity of drying ſpices; after this they laid it

2 Chron. xvi. 14.

2 Chron. xxi. 19. Jerem. xxxiv. 5.

it in the ſepulchre, which was a little cavity, or cloſet, cut in the rock ſo artfully that ſome had doors to ſhut, which turned upon hinges, and a table to lay the body upon, all cut out of the ſame ſtone. There are ſtill many of them to be ſeen.

2 Sam. iii. 31. They that attended the funeral were in mourning, and wept aloud, as they did at Abner's.

Jerem. ix. 11. Matth. ix. 23. There were women that made a trade of crying upon theſe occaſions, and joined the mournful ſound of flutes with their voices. In fine, they compoſed ſongs inſtead of funeral orations for illuſtrious perſons that came to an unfortunate end. Such were thoſe that

2 Sam. i. 17. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. David made upon the death of Saul, and Jeremiah the prophet upon that of Joſiah.

Though burying the dead was a duty of piety, yet there was no religious ceremony uſed at it: on the contrary it was a profane action, and rendered all thoſe unclean that were concerned in it, till they were purified; becauſe all dead bodies are either actually corrupted, or in a ſtate that tends to it. Thus prieſts were ſo far from being neceſſary at burials, that they

Levit. xxi. 1, 2, 3. were abſolutely forbidden to aſſiſt at any, except of their very near relations. When Joſiah

deſigned

deſigned to root out idolatry, he cauſed the bones of the falſe prophets to be burnt upon the altars of the idols, to inſpire his people with a greater abhorrence of them. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 5.

CHAP. XVI.

Their religion.

WHAT has been ſaid relates to the private life of the Iſraelites. We come now to their religious and political government. I ſhall not be very prolix in explaining their creed: we ought to be acquainted with it, for it is contained in our own. I ſhall only obſerve that ſome truths were revealed to them clearly, whilſt others were ſtill obſcure though they were already revealed. Joſ. cont. App. l. ii. c. 8.

What they knew diſtinctly was this: That there is but one God; that he governs all things by his providence, that there is no truſt to be put in any but him, nor good to be expected from any one elſe: that he ſees every thing, even the ſecrets of the heart: that he influences the will by his inward operation, and turns it as he pleaſes: that all men are born in ſin, and naturally inclined to evil: that however they may do good by Deut. iv. 39. vi. 4. Pſalm civ. 127. Pſalm lxi. 71. Iſaiah xxxvi. Jer. xvii. Pſ. cxxxix. and Kings i. vii. 39. Prov. xxi. 1 Pſal. li. 5. Gen. vi. 5. Deut. xxx. 6. Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

Deut. xxx. 19, 20. Pſ. xvii. l. 6. God's aſſiſtance: that they are free and have the choice of doing good or evil: that God is ſtrictly juſt, and puniſhes or rewards according to merit: that he is full of mercy and compaſſion for thoſe that ſincerely repent of their ſins: that he judges the actions of all men after their death *; from whence it follows that the ſoul is immortal, and that there is another life.

Deut. xxxii. Eccl. viii. 11. xi. 9. xii. 14. Wiſdom ii. 23.

Deut. vii. 6. ix. 5, 6. Gen. xlix. 10. Iſaiah. xi. 1, 10. They knew beſides, that God, out of his mere loving kindneſs, had choſen them from amongſt all mankind to be his faithful people: that from them, of the tribe of Judah, and the family of David would be born a Saviour that ſhould deliver them from all their hardſhips, and bring all nations to the knowledge of the true God. All this they knew very clearly, and it was the moſt uſual ſubject of their prayers and meditations. This was that exalted wiſdom which diſtinguiſhed them from all the people of the earth. For whereas, in other nations, none but the wiſe men knew ſome of theſe great truths, and that but imperfectly, and had different opinions about them; all the Iſraelites were inſtructed in this doctrine, and did not vary the leaſt in their notions about it.

Orig. cont. Celſ. Joſeph. 2. c. App. 6.

* How far this was their general belief, I muſt leave to be ſettled between Dr. Warburton and his oppoſers.

The truths they were taught more obſcurely, were that in God there are three perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: that the Saviour they expected, ſhould be God and the Son of God: that he ſhould be God and man both at the ſame time: that God would not give men his grace and the aſſiſtance neceſſary to perform his law, but through this Saviour, and upon account of his merits: that he ſhould ſuffer death to expiate the ſins of mankind: that his kingdom ſhould be altogether ſpiritual: that all men ſhall riſe again: that in another life there ſhall be a juſt reward for the good, and puniſhment for the wicked. All this is taught in the Scriptures of the Old teſtament; but not ſo clearly that all the people knew it: neither were men capable at that time of bearing ſuch ſublime truths.

Gen. i. 26. Pſalm xxxiii. 6. Iſaiah xlviii. 16. Prov. xxx. 4. Pſ. xi. 7. Pſalm xlv. 6, 7. Gen. xxii. 18. Iſaiah liii. 5, 6, 11. Job xix. 26. Pſalm xvii. 15.

But my deſign is only to explain in what the outward practice of their religion differed from our cuſtoms. They had only one temple and one altar on which it was lawful to offer ſacrifice to God. Which was a ſymbol of God's unity: and this building was the moſt magnificent in the whole world, to repreſent alſo his ſovereign majeſty. It was not one only building, like moſt of our

churches, but a great encloſure, comprehending courts ſurrounded with galleries and ſeveral offices for the different courſes of Prieſts and Levites, beſides the body of the temple. The temples of other nations, as the Egyptians and Chaldeans, had alſo large edifices adjoining to them, and ſtood upon a great deal of ground: but they always planted trees about them: whereas the Iſraelites would not ſuffer any to grow near theirs, that they might keep entirely free from the ſuperſtition of groves, which the pagans held ſacred.

1 Kings vi. 2, 3, 20. Joſ. Ant. l. xv. c. ult. & de bell. Jud. l. vi. c. 6.

The body of the temple was ſixty * cubits long and twenty broad, and thirty high, without reckoning the *holy of holies*, which

* We find two different cubits in the Scripture; one of them equal (as Dr. Arbuthnot ſays) to an Engliſh foot, nine inches and $\frac{888}{1000}$ of an inch: being a 4th part of the *fathom*, double the *ſpan*, and ſix times the *palm*. The other equal to one foot and $\frac{824}{1000}$ of a foot, or the 400th part of a *ſtadium*. The Romans too had a cubit equal to one Engliſh foot, five inches and $\frac{46}{100}$ of an inch. Father Mercenne makes the Hebrew cubit one foot four digits and five lines, with regard to the foot of the capital. According to Hero, the geometrical cubit is 24 digits: and according to Vitruvius, the foot is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Roman cubit, i. e. ſixteen digits or finger's breadths. — The Scripture ſays here, the cubits were *after the firſt meaſure*. Vid. 2 Chron. iii. 3.

joined

joined to it on the ſame floor, and was twenty cubits in length, and twenty in breadth, and twenty in height. At the entrance there was a porch that ſupported a great tower a hundred and twenty cubits high, and twenty broad. 2 Chron. iii. 4. 1 Kings vi. 3. I leave the learned to judge of the proportions. But I muſt deſire thoſe that think the temple ſmall, to conſider, that the people were never to go into it; only the prieſts, and ſuch as waited on them, and that at ſtated times, morning and evening, to light the lamps, and offer bread and perfumes. The high-prieſt was the only perſon that entered into the ſanctuary where the ark of the convenant ſtood, nor did he go in oftner than once a year.

The whole temple and ſanctuary too were wainſcoated with cedar, adorned with carvings and all covered with plates of gold. On the outſide it was ſurrounded with two cedar-floors, which made three ſtories of chambers for different uſes. Before the temple, in a great court, was the altar for holocauſts or whole burnt offerings, that is to ſay, a platform thirty cubits ſquare and fifteen high. The prieſts went up to it by an eaſy aſcent without ſteps, to place the wood and victims in order. In the ſame court were ten great brazen baſons ſet upon rolling bottoms, and Cœnacula.

that, which was ſupported by twelve oxen, the Scripture calls the *brazen ſea.*

This court belonged to the prieſts, eſpecially that part betwixt the altar and the porch, for the laity might advance as far as the altar to preſent their victims and ſlay them, when they offered ſacrifices. The Levites ſtood upon the ſtairs of the porch, which faced the temple, to ſing and play upon muſical inſtruments. The court of the prieſts was encloſed with galleries, and ſurrounded with a firſt court much larger, which was the uſual place for the people, where the women were ſeparated from the men, and the gentiles might not come any farther than to ſtand under the galleries which made the encloſure of the firſt court. There were ſeveral parlours, chambers, and ſtore-houſes, for different uſes, adjoining to theſe galleries of each encloſure.

Ezek. xl. xli. xlii.

Gazophylacia, Paſtophoria, Thalami, Exedræ. vid. Jer. xxxv. 4. 1 Eſd. ii. 14. Ezek. xliv. 19. 2 Chron. xxxi. 11, 12. 2 Macc. iii. 10.

They had treaſuries for the ſacred veſſels of gold and ſilver, which were ſo numerous that even at their return from the captivity they brought home five thouſand four hundred; veſtries likewiſe for the ſacerdotal habits, and ſtorehouſes, where they laid up the offerings ſet apart for the maintenance of the prieſts and levites, widows and orphans, and what was committed to their charge by private

vate people. For it was cuſtomary with the ancients to depoſite what was given for the public in temples. In other places they kept wine and oil for the libations, ſalt to ſeaſon all the ſacrifices, and the lambs that had been picked out to be offered at the evening and morning ſacrifice, which was never omitted. In other places they made ſhew-bread, and what other paſtry was neceſſary for the ſacrifices. They had kitchins for the fleſh of the victims, eating rooms for the prieſts and guard of the Levites that kept the doors and watched the temple day and night, beſides lodgings for thoſe of them that were muſicians; one, where the Nazarites were ſhaved after their vow; another, to examine lepers in: a hall where the chief council of ſeventy elders was held, and other rooms of the ſame nature, with which we are not ſo particularly acquainted. So many fine regular buildings gave, no doubt, a high idea of the great king that was ſerved in that ſacred palace.

Talmud. Cod. Middoth.

Ezek. xl. 44.

They offered four lambs every day for an holocauſt, two in the morning and two in the evening: and this is what was called *the continual ſacrifice*. On ſabbath and feſtival days the ſacrifices were multiplied in proportion to the ſolemnity, without reckoning the offer-

תמיד ἐνδιαλειχισμὸς, juge ſacrificium.

ings of private people which were daily very numerous.

We are offended at the bloody ſacrifices which made the temple a ſhambles: but it was the ſame amongſt other nations; and the Iſraelites had taken ſufficient precautions for performing theſe ſacrifices with all the cleanlineſs and decency imaginable. The ſituation of the temple contributed to it: For as it was upon a mountain, they had made drains underneath to carry off the blood and naſtineſs. The peculiar part of the prieſts office was only to pour out the blood, light the fire, and lay the pieces upon it that were to be offered. There were others to kill the victims, prepare them, cut them in pieces and dreſs them: we ſee it in the law and the ſtory of the ſons of Eli. The prieſts never did theſe things but at the publick ſacrifices that were offered for all the people.

Levit. iv. 10.

1 Sam. ii. 13.

After this we are not to think the compariſon of a *pot* ſtrange, which we read of in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to repreſent Jeruſalem. Theſe two prophets were prieſts, and uſed to ſee the ſanctified meat dreſſed. Now they eſteemed every thing honourable that was imployed in the ſervice of God, and the performing of the law: beſides it was uſual for

Jerem. i. 13. Ezek. xxiv. 3, 4.

for the very beſt ſort of people to work with their own hands and do the neceſſary offices of life themſelves, as we ſaid before. Thus, in Homer, king Agamemnon kills the lambs with his own hands, the blood of which was the ſeal of the treaty he had made with the Trojans. Thus, when Neſtor ſacrificed to Minerva, his own ſons kill the victims, cut the fleſh in pieces, and broil it. He abounds with examples of this ſort, not only when he is ſpeaking of religious matters, but upon other occaſions: as when Achilles entertained the meſſengers of the other Grecian generals.

Iliad. iii.

Odyſſ. ii. in fine.

As to the reſt, every thing that is preſcribed by the law relating to the quality of victims and the manner of performing the ſacrifices, tended rather to cure the Iſraelites of their ſuperſtitions by confining them to a few ceremonies, than to introduce new ones. Idolaters ſacrificed in more places, uſed more ceremonies and a greater variety of animals: for they had every where temples and altars, and each family had their domeſtick Gods and particular ſuperſtitions. Thus God prepared his people in a diſtant manner for the aboliſhing bloody ſacrifices, telling them often at the ſame time by his prophets, that he had

Tertull. in Marc. l. ii. cap. 18.

Herod. l. ii. c. 40.

no

1 Sam. xv. 22. Pſalm l. 8. &c. Iſa. lxvi. 3.

no need of them, that they were not eſſential to religion, and that the worſhip moſt agreeable to him was thankſgiving and converſion of heart.

It was neceſſary for the prieſts to be married, as the prieſthood was annexed to the family of Aaron: but they parted from their wives during the time of their officiating, and drank neither wine nor any other liquor that could intoxicate. The ſame abſtinence may be obſerved amongſt idolaters, eſpecially the Egyptians: and their prieſts wore nothing but linnen, and ſhoes made of the plant that gives name to paper, that they might not have any thing about them that came from dead beaſts and tended to corruption. The Iſraelite prieſts officiated bare-foot, but with linnen garments on. They were forbidden to wear any woolen, and put off thoſe ſacred veſtments when they came out of their precinct to go into the court of the people. The prieſts and all the Levites led a paſtoral life, that was ſo dear to the Patriarchs, when they were not upon duty, and had no other ſubſtance than their flocks; for they were excluded from any ſhare of land to wean them the more from temporal cares, and give them greater leiſure to employ themſelves in the affairs

Levit. x. 9.

Ezek. xliv. 17.

affairs of religion. Yet they were wealthy when the people paid them juſtly what was ordered by the law; for though there were fewer of that tribe[a] than of any elſe, they had tithe of all fruits gathered by the other twelve, and conſequently their ſhare was the largeſt. They had beſides, the firſtlings of all animals, without reckoning their own cattle, and the daily offerings, on which the prieſts lived when they ſerved at the altar.

I do not perceive that they were excluded from any civil office: they bore arms like other men, and the prieſts ſounded the trumpet in the army and upon all other occaſions; for they made uſe of ſilver trumpets to proclaim the feaſts, and call the people to publick prayers; and the name of *Jubilee* is derived from a ram's horn, which was ſounded to give notice of it's opening. The antient monks of Egypt obſerved the cuſtom of blowing a trumpet at the hours of prayer, for the uſe of bells is more modern.

2 Chron. xiii. 12. Numb. x. Joſeph. Ant. iii. 12. Levit. xxv. 9.

The feaſts of the Iſraelites were the Sabbath; the firſt day of each month, called in our tranſlations calends or new-moon; the three great feaſts of the paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles, inſtituted in memory of the

Ibid. xxiii.

[a] About a 30th of the whole. Near a 27th part, Numb. i. 32. iii. 43. and $\frac{1}{23}$ in 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.

three

three greateſt bleſſings they received from God, the coming out of Egypt, the promulgation of the law, and their ſettlement in the promiſed land, after their journeying in the wilderneſs, where they had ſo long lodged under tents. Theſe great ſolemnities laſted ſeven days, probably in memory of the week of the creation.

Their year conſiſted of twelve months, each of thirty days[a], very little different from ours. Thus we find it regulated from Noah's time, as appears by the date of the deluge; but it is thought it began then at the autumnal equinox. Moſes was ordered to begin it in ſpring, in the month Abib, which was that of the paſſover; and it is with reſpect to the firſt month that the others are reckoned, which are only named from their number. They agree very nearly with our Roman months, the names of which come from the old year that began in the month of March. Thus, the eighth month was October, at leaſt, part of it; the ninth happened in November, and ſo on. They computed their month by the moon, at leaſt in later times; not aſtronomically, but according to it's appearance, from the day that they, whoſe buſi-

Exod. xiii. 4.

[a] In Gen. vii. 11. comp. with viii. 3, 4. we ſee one hundred and fifty days are equal to five months.

neſs

neſs it was, had declared the new moon, which was the day after it appeared.

The feaſts of the Iſraelites were true feaſts, that is to ſay, times of real joy. All the men were obliged to be at Jeruſalem at the great feaſts of the paſſover, pentecoſt, and tabernacles, and the women were permitted to come too. The concourſe was then very great, every body dreſſed and adorned themſelves in their beſt cloaths. They had the pleaſure of ſeeing all their friends and relations: they aſſiſted at the prayers and ſacrifices, which were always accompanied with muſick: after that followed the feaſts in which they ate the peace-offerings in this magnificent temple. The law itſelf commanded them to rejoice, and join ſenſible mirth to ſpiritual.

We muſt not wonder, therefore, if it was agreeable news to hear that a feaſt was nigh, and that they were ſoon to go to the houſe of the Lord; that they eſteemed thoſe happy that ſpent their life there; that they went thither in great troops, ſinging and playing on inſtruments; and that, on the contrary, they thought themſelves unhappy when they could not be there, which David ſo often laments in his exile. Pſalm cxxii. and lxxxiv. Pſalm xlii. 4. and xliii.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Their faſts and vows.

FASTING days were quite the reverſe of feſtivals. Upon thoſe they did all that I have related in ſpeaking of mourning. For faſting and mourning with them were the ſame thing. It did not conſiſt therefore only in eating later, but being afflicted in all reſpects. They ſpent the whole day without eating or drinking 'till night: thus the Jews ſtill faſt, and the Mahometans, who herein imitate both them and the primitive Chriſtians. They obſerved a ſtrict ſilence, put on ſackcloth and aſhes, and expreſſed every other ſign of affliction. The publick faſts were proclaimed by ſound of trumpet, as well as the feaſts: all the people at Jeruſalem met together in the temple, and at other places in the publick ſquare: they read leſſons out of the law, and the moſt venerable old men exhorted the people to confeſs their ſins and repent of them. They never married upon thoſe days, ſuch as were already married ſeparated themſelves from their wives.

Iſaiah lviii. 5.

1 Kings xxi. 12. Joel ii. 15, 16, &c.

The law had appointed but one faſt day, the tenth of the ſeventh month, which was the

Levit. xvi. 29, &c.

the feaſt of atonement: but from the time of the prophet Zachariah, they reckoned two more, one in the fifth month, and another in the tenth. They had extraordinary faſts; ſome in publick calamities, as the dearth which Joel ſpeaks of; others upon particular misfortunes, as David's faſt for the ſickneſs of his child, that was the offspring of his great crime; for the death of Abner, and upon many other occaſions mentioned in the Pſalms. In fine, they had faſts which they impoſed upon themſelves, out of pure devotion, or to perform ſome vow: for they were very ſtrict in keeping their vows and oaths. As to vows, the inſtance of Jephthah is but too convincing: and for oaths, Joſhua kept the promiſe he made to the Gibeonites, though it was obtained by a manifeſt fraud, becauſe he had ſworn to them by the name of the Lord. Saul had reſolved to put Jonathan to death for tranſgreſſing the order he had made with an oath, though Jonathan offended only thro' ignorance; and we ſee many more examples of it. They entered into ſuch ſolemn engagements very ſeriouſly, and did not allow themſelves any latitude in interpreting them. Swearing by the name of God, was an act of religion; for this oath diſtinguiſhed the Iſraelites

Zach. viii. 19.
2 Sam. xii. 16.
Ibid. iii. 25.
Pſalm xxxv. 13, 14. lxix. 10. 11.
Judg. xi. 35.
Joſh. ix. 19.
1 Sam. xiv. 27.
Deut. vi. 13.
Pſalm lxiii. 11.

lites from thoſe that ſwore by the name of falſe gods: this is to be underſtood of lawful and neceſſary oaths, ſuch as are taken in a court of judicature.

Their vows conſiſted uſually in offering ſome part of their ſubſtance to God, either for his ſervice in ſacrifices, or to be ſet apart by itſelf. From thence came thoſe great treaſures in Solomon's temple, which were made up of the offerings of David, Samuel, Saul, Abner, and Joab. It was chiefly of the booty taken from enemies. The Gentiles made ſuch offerings in the temples of their falſe gods, ſometimes after victories, ſometimes upon other occaſions: we need no other example than the temple of Delphi, and the rich preſents that Crœſus ſent to obtain favourable oracles.

1 Chron. xxvi. 27.

Herodot. l. i.

The moſt conſiderable vow was that of the Nazarites, who obliged themſelves for ſo long a time to drink no wine nor ſtrong drink, nor to cut their hair, and to keep themſelves carefully from all legal impurities, particularly coming near dead bodies. The rule of the Rechabites ſeems to be founded upon ſuch vows. The author of it was Jonadab the ſon of Rechab, who lived in the time of Jehu king of Iſrael, and the prophet Eliſha. He forbad

Numb. vi.

2 Kings x. 15.

forbad his children to drink wine, build houſes, to plant, have lands, or vineyards. They abode therefore under tents, employing themſelves, in all probability, as the Levites did, in breeding cattle, and exactly imitating the paſtoral life of the patriarchs: they were married, and inviolably obſerved this rule in their family, at leaſt one hundred and eighty years, for we cannot tell what became of them after the captivity. Jerem. xxxv, 6.

CHAP. XVIII.

Their prophets.

ANOTHER ſort of religious people, and much more conſiderable, were the prophets. There was a great number of them from Samuel's time: witneſs that company which Saul met, who propheſied at the ſound of inſtruments, tranſported by the ſpirit of God; and that other company which propheſied before Samuel, and ſeem to have been his diſciples. But it does not appear that there ever were ſo many, as from the days of Elijah and Eliſha to the Babyloniſh captivity. They lived ſeparate from the world, diſtinguiſhed by their habit and way of living; they dwelt upon mountains, as Elijah and Eliſha did upon 1 Sam. x. 5. Ibid. xix. 20.

2 Kings iv. 10. Carmel and Gilgal. The rich woman, who lodged Eliſha when he went by Shunam, had a chamber, as I ſaid, built and furniſhed for him, where he lived ſo retired, that he did not ſpeak ſo much as to the perſon who entertained him, but made his ſervant Gehazi ſpeak to her for him: and when ſhe came to intreat him to raiſe her ſon to life again, Gehazi would not let her touch the prophet's feet. When Naaman, general of the Syrian armies, came to him to be cured of his leproſy, he ſent him word what to do, without being ſeen by him.

Ibid. ver. 27.

2 Kings v. 10.

Two other of this prophet's miracles ſhew that his diſciples lived in ſocieties; that of the herb-potage which he made wholeſome, and that of the barley bread which he multiplied: which ſhews alſo the plainneſs of their food. There were a hundred prophets that lived together in this ſociety, and they wrought with their hands; for, finding their lodgings too ſtrait, they went themſelves to cut down wood to build with, and were ſo poor, that one of them borrowed a hatchet. The example of Habakkuk, who was taken away by an angel to carry Daniel the dinner which he had got ready for his reapers, is another proof of the ſimple and laborious life of the prophets.

2 Kings iv. 38, 43.

Bel and Drag. ver. 33.

Their dreſs was ſackcloth or hair cloth, that is, mourning, to ſhew they were always in affliction for the ſins of the people. Thus, to deſcribe Elijah, they ſaid *he was a man cloathed in a hairy garment, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.* Thus, when God bids Iſaiah undreſs himſelf, he orders him *to looſe his ſackcloth from off his loins.* It appears, that the two great prophets metioned in the Revelations, were both cloathed in ſackcloth.

2 Kings i. 18.

Iſaiah xx. 2.

Rev. xi. 3.

The prophets, at leaſt ſome of them, were nevertheleſs married men; and that widow, whoſe oil Eliſha multiplied, was a prophet's widow. It ſeems alſo as if their children followed the ſame profeſſion; for the prophets are often called *ſons of the prophets:* which made Amos ſay, *I am no prophet, nor prophet's ſon, but only a herds-man*; to ſhew, that he did not propheſy by profeſſion, but by an extraordinary call. For though God moſt frequently made uſe of ſuch as led a prophetick life, to declare his will, yet was he under no obligation not to make revelations to any one elſe.

2 Kings iv. 1.

Amos vii. 14.

Yet commonly none were reckoned prophets, but ſuch as led that ſort of life; from whence it comes, that the books of David, So-

Eccluſ xlix. 10. lomon, and Daniel, are not put among the prophetick books; becauſe the two firſt were kings, living delicately and magnificently, and the other, a Perſian governor, who alſo lived at court, and in the hurry of the world.

Theſe holy men, after the patriarchs, preſerved the pureſt tradition of the true religion: Their employment was meditating upon the law of God, praying to him often day and night, both for themſelves and others; and inuring themſelves to the practice of every virtue. They inſtructed their diſciples, explained to them the ſpirit and meaning of the law, and opened to them the ſublime myſteries relating to the ſtate of the church, either upon earth, or in heaven, after the Meſſiah ſhould come, that were hid under allegories of things ſenſible, and ſeemingly mean. They inſtructed the people too who came to hear them upon Sabbath and other feaſt days. They reproved them for their vices, and exhorted them to repent, often foretelling, from God, what was to happen to them. This liberty which they took of ſpeaking the moſt diſagreeable truths, even to kings, made them hated, and coſt many of them their lives.

1 Kings xxi 20.

However there were many impoſtors who counterfeited the outward demeanour of true

prophets, wore ſackcloth as they did, ſpake the ſame language, pretending they were alſo inſpired by God: but they took care not to foretell any thing that would be diſagreeable either to the prince or people. The falſe gods alſo had their prophets, as the eight hundred and fifty whom Elijah cauſed to be ſlain. Of the ſame ſort were the ſoothſayers amongſt the Greeks, that were called μάντεις, as Calchas and Tireſias in the times of the heroes: ſuch likewiſe were they that gave out oracles, or made money of them, and the poets, who ſaid they were inſpired by the gods. For they did not mean to have it thought that they ſaid ſo only in a poetical manner, but to make it believed that they really were: and in fact, theſe falſe prophets, either by the operation of the devil, or ſome artifice, became tranſported, and ſpake in an unuſual ſtyle, to imitate the viſible effects which the ſpirit of God cauſed in the true prophets. Now, thoſe Iſraelites, that were not thoroughly confirmed in their religion, lay under great temptations to conſult theſe diviners and falſe oracles, and it was a part of idolatry which they were very ſubject to fall into, during the whole period of which we ſpeak.

Zachar. xiii. 4.

1 Kings xviii. 19. and 40.

CHAP. XIX.

Their idolatry.

THIS propenſity to idolatry appears to us very ſtrange and abſurd in the manners of the Iſraelites; and from hence many have imagined they were a brutiſh and unpoliſhed people. We ſee no idolaters now; we only hear it ſaid that there are ſome in the Indies and other remote countries.

But all people that live about us, Hereticks, Jews, and Mahometans, preach one only God almighty. The moſt ignorant country people know this truth diſtinctly; we conclude, therefore, that ſuch as believed more gods than one, and adored pieces of wood and ſtone, ought to be accounted the moſt ignorant of mankind, and perfect barbarians. However, we cannot call the Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, Syrians, and other people of antiquity, ignorant and barbarians, from whom all arts, human learning and politeneſs have been handed down to us: neither can we deny that idolatry reigned amongſt them in the moſt abſolute manner, at the very time when in every thing elſe they were perfectly ingenious and polite. Let us ſtop here then a little

a little, and ſearch into the ſource of this evil.

The mind of man is ſo overcaſt ſince the fall, that, whilſt he continues in the ſtate of corrupted nature, he has no notion of ſpiritual things; he thinks of nothing but matter and corporeal ſubjects, and makes light of whatſoever does not fall within the compaſs of his ſenſes: nor does any thing appear even ſubſtantial to him, but what ſtrikes the groſſeſt of them, the taſte and touch: we ſee it too plainly in children and men that are guided by their paſſions, they make no account of any thing but what they can ſee and feel; every thing elſe they look upon as caſtles in the air. Yet theſe men are brought up in the true religion, in the knowledge of God, the immortality of the ſoul, and a future ſtate. What ſentiments had the antient gentiles, who never heard theſe things mentioned, and had only objects of ſenſe and matter laid before them by their wiſeſt men? We may read Homer, the great divine and prophet of the Greeks, as long as we pleaſe; we ſhall not find there the leaſt hint that can induce us to imagine he had any notion of things ſpiritual and incorporeal.

Thus all their wiſdom was employed in what relates to the body and ſenſes. The deſign of their bodily exerciſes, and all that gymnaſtick regimen which they made ſo much rout about, was to preſerve and increaſe their health, ſtrength, dexterity, and beauty; and they carried that art to the utmoſt perfection. Painting, ſculpture, and architecture delight the eyes; and they had advanced them to ſuch a pitch, that their villas, cities, and whole country were full of entertaining objects, as we ſee by the deſcriptions of Pauſanias. They excelled alſo in muſick; and tho' poetry ſeems to ſtrike deeper than the ſenſes, it reaches no farther than the imagination, which has the ſame objects, and produces the like effects. Their laws, and moſt antient rules of morality, all relate to the ſenſes; providing that their lands ſhould be well cultivated, that each particular perſon ſhould have enough to live comfortably upon, that men ſhould marry healthy and fruitful wives, that children ſhould be educated ſo, as to have ſtrong conſtitutions, and fit for war; and that every body ſhould be protected from being injured, either by ſtrangers or bad neighbours.

They

They ſtudied the good of the ſoul ſo little, that they depraved it extremely, by the too great care they took in improving the body. It was manifeſtly immodeſt in young men to appear ſtark naked in publick, and perform their exerciſes ſo before all the world: yet they made light of it. And at Lacedæmon the young women did ſo too. It was of dangerous conſequence to expoſe ſtatues and pictures, even the moſt obſcene, in every part naked and uncovered: and the danger was ſtill greater to painters and ſculptors, who copied from the life. No matter, there was a neceſſity for gratifying the luſt of the eyes. It is well known at what a degree of debauchery the Greeks were arrived by theſe fine cuſtoms: they practiſed the moſt abominable lewdneſs, and not only practiſed, but held it in eſteem. Their muſick and poetry likewiſe, fomenting the ſame vices, both excited and kept up jealouſies and mortal hatred betwixt the poets, the actors, and ſpectators; and particular characters were cruelly ſlandered and pulled in pieces. That never gave them any concern, provided the ſpectacles were diverting, and the ſongs ſuch as entertained them.

The ſame may be ſaid of their religion: inſtead of improving, it was of prejudice to their

their manners. Now the riſe of all theſe evils was man's forgetting himſelf and his ſpiritual nature. All mankind had preſerved a conſtant tradition that there was a nature more excellent than the human, capable of doing them good or harm, and being acquainted with none but corporeal beings, they would perſuade themſelves, that this nature, that is, the divinity, was ſo too: and conſequently that there were many gods, that every part of the creation might have ſome, and that each nation, city, and family, had deities peculiar to themſelves. They fancied they were immortal, and, to make them happy, attributed to them all ſorts of pleaſures, (without which they thought there could be no true felicity,) and even the moſt ſhameful debauches: which afterwards again ſerved to countenance their own paſſions by the example of their gods. They were not content with imagining them either in heaven or upon earth: they muſt ſee them and touch them: for which reaſon, they honoured idols as much as the gods themſelves; conceiving that they were united and incorporated with them: and they honoured theſe ſtatues ſo much the more for their beauty, or antiquity, or any other ſingularity they had to recommend them.

Wiſdom xiii. 10.

Their

Their worſhip was of a piece with their belief. It was wholly founded upon two paſſions, the love of pleaſure, and the fear of coming to any outward harm. Their ſacrifices were always accompanied with feaſts, and muſick, and dancing. Comedy and tragedy had their riſe from their merry-makings after vintage in honour of Bacchus. The Olympic games, and other trials of ſkill ſo much celebrated in hiſtory, were inſtituted in honour of their gods. In ſhort all the Grecian ſhews were acts of religion, and it was a piece of devotion, in their way, to aſſiſt at the moſt ſcandalous of Ariſtophanes's comedies. Thus, their chief buſineſs in time of peace was taking care of the *ſacred combats* and theatrical ſhews; and often, in time of war, they were more attentive to theſe things, and at greater expence about them than in the war itſelf.

Wiſdom xiv. 27.

Tertull. de Spect. Auguſt. 2. de Civ.

Demoſth. Philipp. 5.

Their religion then was not a doctrine of morality, like the true religion; they reckoned him a ſaint that was neither murderer, traitor, nor guilty of perjury; who avoided the company of thoſe that had committed ſuch crimes, who kept up the rights of hoſpitality, and places of refuge, who faithfully performed his vows and gave liberally towards ſacrifices and

Auguſt. de vera Relig. in init.

Plato. Euthyph. and public ſhews. Religion was looked upon as a trade; they made offerings to the gods, that they might obtain what they deſired in their prayers. As to any thing elſe, de-

Apul. l. i. bauchery did not offend it at all. Apuleius, after all the villanous actions with which he fills his metamorphoſis, concludes with a deſcription of his devotions, that is, how officious he was to get himſelf initiated into all ſorts of myſteries, and how exact in obſerving all the ceremonies of them. Debauchery was ſo far from being condemned by religion, that it was ſometimes enjoined: there was no

Clem. Alex. in protrept. celebrating the Bacchanal feaſts in a proper manner without getting drunk, and there were women that proſtituted themſelves in honour of Venus, particularly at Corinth. It is well known what the god of gardens, and the myſteries of Ceres and Cybele, were.

Thus they honoured the gods whom they thought kind and beneficent. But for the infernal deities, Hecate, the Eumenides, the Parcæ, and others, with the ſtories of whom they were terrified, they were to be appeaſed

Wiſd. xiv. 23. with nocturnal ſacrifices, and frightful inhuman ceremonies. Some buried men alive, others ſacrificed children, and ſometimes their own: as the worſhipers of Moloch mentioned

with

with ſo much deteſtation in Scripture, who ſtill kept up this abominable cuſtom in Africa in Tertullian's time. Tertull. Apol. c. 9.

To this fear and dread were owing all the reſt of their cruel and troubleſome ſuperſtitions; as letting themſelves blood with lancets, or cutting themſelves with knives, as the falſe prophets of Baal and the prieſts of Cybele did; as their faſting and bathing in cold * water, and other ſuch things. They thought thereby to avert particular evils or public calamities, which they were threatned with in dreams and prodigies according to the interpretation of their ſooth-ſayers. They prevented ſickneſs, plagues, hail, and dearths, as they thought. For upon ſuch occaſions mankind is apt rather to do things that are of no uſe at all than to omit any thing that may be thought ſerviceable. All their luſtrations or expiations for crimes were troubleſome ſuperſtitions of this ſort, they conſiſted in purifying the body by water or fire, and performing certain ſacrifices: but there was no mention of either repentance or converſion. 1 Kings xviii. 28.

It will ſeem ſtrange perhaps that people ſo wiſe as the Grecians ſhould give into ſuch

* Manè die, quo tu indicis jejunia, nudus
In Tiberi ſtabit. — Hor. Lib. II. Sat. ii. 221.

groſs

groſs ſuperſtitions, and ſo eaſily ſuffer themſelves to be impoſed upon by aſtrologers, diviners, ſoothſayers, and many other ſorts of conjurers. But it muſt be conſidered, that, till Alexander's time, and the reign of the Macedonians, they had made no great progreſs in ſuch learning as might cure them of ſuperſtition. They excelled in arts, their laws were wiſe; in a word, they had brought every thing to perfection, that makes life eaſy and agreeable: but they took little pains in the ſpeculative ſciences, geometry, aſtronomy, and phyſics. The anatomy of plants and animals, the knowledge of minerals and meteors, the ſhape of the earth, the courſe of the ſtars and the whole ſyſtem of the world were ſtill myſteries to them. The Chaldeans and Egyptians, who already knew ſomething of them, kept it a great ſecret, and never ſpake of them but in riddles, with which they mixed an infinite number of ſuperſtitious fables.

As theſe ſciences depend chiefly upon experience, a ſucceſſion of ages always improves them, and they are at preſent in the greateſt perfection they ever were. They are taught openly to any one that will apply himſelf to them, and agree perfectly with our holy religion which condemns all ſuperſtition, divination,

nation, and magic; however we find but too many that give ear to aſtrologers and ſuch impoſtors, not only peaſants and ignorant people of the loweſt ſort, but ladies that value themſelves upon their wit, politeneſs, and knowledge; and men that, notwithſtanding they have had a good education, ſet up for freethinkers, and cannot poſſibly ſubmit to the dictates of true religion.

What then muſt be the caſe when all this nonſenſe made a part of religion; when conjurers were taken for men really inſpired; when aſtrology, pyromancy, necromancy, and ſuch knaveries, were eſteemed divine knowledge? How was it poſſible to reſiſt the authority of the prieſts, who gravely recounted an infinite ſeries of proofs in confirmation of their doctrine, and were implicitly obeyed by whole nations? They could not help believing them, when they did not know how to account for theſe things in a philoſophical manner; and if they had known, they muſt have been very bold to have contradicted them.

A proneneſs to idolatry was not therefore peculiar to the Iſraelites. It was a general evil; and the hardneſs of heart, with which the Scripture ſo often reproaches them, is not for being more attached to earthly things than

than other people, but for being ſo much as they were, after having recived ſuch particular favours from the hand of God, and ſeen the great wonders that he had wrought for them. It is true, much reſolution is neceſſary to reſiſt the influence of bad example in all other nations. When an Iſraelite was out of his own country, and amongſt infidels, they reproached him with having no religion at all, becauſe they did not ſee him offer any ſacrifice, or worſhip idols: and when he told them of his God, the Creator of heaven and earth, they laughed at him, and aſked where he was. Theſe taunts were hard to bear: David himſelf ſays that, when he was an exile, *He fed himſelf day and night with his tears*, becauſe they daily aſked him, *where his God was*. Weak minds were ſtaggered with theſe attacks, and often gave way to them.

Pſ. xlii. 3.

The propenſity that all mankind has to pleaſure heightened the temptation: as the heathen feaſts were very frequent and magnicent, curioſity eaſily prevailed upon young people, eſpecially women, to go and ſee the pomp of their proceſſions, the manner of dreſſing out the victims, the dancing, the choirs of muſic, and ornaments of their temples.

Some

Some officious body engaged them to take a place at the feaſt, and eat the meat that was offered to idols, or come and lodge at his houſe. They made acquaintance and carried on love intrigues, which generally ended either in downright debauchery, or marrying contrary to the law. Thus did idolatry inſinuate itſelf by the moſt common allurements of women and good cheer. In the time of Moſes the Iſraelites were engaged in the infamous myſteries of Baal Peor by the Midianitiſh women, who were the *ſtrange women* that perverted Solomon. Numb. xxv.

Beſides, the law of God might appear too ſevere to them. Theſe were not allowed to ſacrifice in any place but one, by the hands too of ſuch prieſts only as were deſcended from Aaron, and according to ſome very ſtrict rules. They had but three great feaſts in the whole year, the paſſover, pentecoſt, and feaſt of tabernacles: a very few for people that lived in plenty, and in a climate that inclined them to pleaſure: as they lived in the country, employed in huſbandry, they could not conveniently meet together but at feaſts, and for that reaſon were obliged to borrow ſome of ſtrangers, and invent others. Do not we ourſelves, who think we are ſo ſpiritual, and

no doubt ought to be ſo, if we were true chriſtians, often prefer the poſſeſſion of temporal things to the hope of eternal? and do not we endeavour to reconcile many diverſions with the Goſpel, which all antiquity has judged inconſiſtent with it, and againſt which our inſtructors are daily exclaiming? It is true we hold idolatry in deteſtation, but it is now no longer a familiar ſight, and has been quite out of faſhion above a thouſand years. We are not then to imagine that the Iſraelites were more ſtupid than other people, becauſe the particular favours they had received from God could not reclaim them from idolatry. But it muſt be owned that the wound of original ſin was very deep, when ſuch holy inſtructions and repeated miracles were not ſufficient to raiſe men above ſenſible things. We ſee however a much greater degree of blindneſs in other nations, as the Greeks and Egyptians, who were in other reſpects the moſt enlightened.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Their political ſtate, liberty, and domeſtic power.

AFTER religion we muſt ſay ſomething of the political ſtate of the Iſraelites. They were perfectly free, eſpecially before they had kings. They had neither homages, nor manours, nor prohibitions from hunting or fiſhing, nor any of thoſe kinds of dependences which are ſo common amongſt us, that lords themſelves are not exempt from them. For we ſee ſovereign princes, that are vaſſals and even officers under other ſovereigns, as in Germany and Italy. They enjoyed therefore that liberty ſo highly valued by the Greeks and Romans, and it was their own fault that they did not enjoy it for ever; it was God's deſign they ſhould, as appears from his reproof delivered to them by Samuel, when they aſked for a king: and Gideon ſeemed to be well apprized of it, ſince, when they offered to make him king and ſecure the kingdom to his poſterity, he anſwered generouſly, *I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my ſon rule over you; the Lord ſhall rule over you.*

1 Sam. x. 18, &c.

Judg. viii. 23.

Their government was therefore neither a monarchy, ariſtocracy, nor democracy, but a theocracy *, as Joſephus calls it: that is,

* Though they were guided by God's peculiar direction, yet the form of their government was at firſt ariſtocratical, which continued to be the baſis of it ever after. It commenced from the death of Jacob, who divided them into twelve tribes, appointing his ſons, with the two ſons of Joſeph, to be rulers or princes over them, Gen. xlix. and ſee Exod. vi. 4. Joſh. xxii. 14. No one tribe had ſuperiority over another; for it is ſaid, Gen. xlix. 16. *Dan ſhall judge his people*, in the ſame manner, *as one of the tribes of Iſrael.* And hence it is, that upon the death of Joſhua, the people enquire of God, *who ſhould go up for them againſt the Canaanites*, Judges i. 1. From this view we ſee the meaning of that important prophecy, Gen. xlix. 10. *The ſceptre ſhall not depart from Judah till Shiloh come*; not a ſceptre, as moſt interpreters underſtand it, to ariſe in Judah's family ſome ages after the death of Jacob, which is againſt the propriety of all language; not a dominion, to be exerciſed by Judah, over all the other tribes, which it never obtained; but that the government now ſettled in each of the tribes, which would depart from the reſt long before the coming of *Shiloh*, ſhould remain with Judah till Shiloh came. Accordingly the Aſſyrian captivity was ruin to the ten tribes; but the Babyloniſh captivity was only a ſeventy years tranſportation of Judah into a foreign country, where they continued under heads and rulers of their own; which privilege they enjoyed till after the death of Chriſt, and, in ſome ſort, till the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. See this proved at large in the incomparable third diſſertation of the biſhop of London.

God

God himſelf governed them immediately by the law that he had given them. As long as they obſerved it faithfully, they lived in freedom and ſafety; as ſoon as they tranſgreſſed it to follow their own imaginations, they fell into anarchy and confuſion, which the Scripture ſhews, when, to account for the prodigious wickedneſs of the times, it ſays, *In thoſe days there was no king in Iſrael, every one did what was right in his own eyes.* This confuſion divided and weakened them, and made them become a prey to their enemies; till, recollecting themſelves, they returned to God, and he ſent them ſome deliverer. Thus they lived under the Judges, relapſing time after time into idolatry and diſobedience to the law of God, and conſequently into ſlavery and confuſion, and as often repenting. At laſt they choſe rather to have a maſter over them than to continue in freedom by faithfully obſerving the law of God,

Judg. xxi. 25.

Judg. ii. 11, 22.

Their liberty reduced to theſe juſt bounds conſiſted in a power to do every thing that was not forbidden by the law, without obligation to do any more than it commanded, or being ſubject to the will of any particular man, but the fathers of families who had great power over their ſervants and children at

home. There were ſome Hebrews ſlaves to their brethren: and the law mentions two caſes that reduced them to that condition; poverty, which obliged them to ſell themſelves; and commiſſion of theft, which they were not able to make amends for. It appears that the ſecond caſe comprehended debts likewiſe, by the example of the widow, whoſe oil Eliſha multiplied, that ſhe might have enough to pay her creditors and ſave her children from ſlavery. It is true, theſe Hebrew ſlaves might regain their freedom at the end of ſix years, that is, in the ſabbatical year: and if they were then not diſpoſed to make uſe of this privilege, they might claim their liberty and that of their children in the Jubilee or fiftieth year. It was recommended to them to uſe their brethren mildly, and rather to make ſlaves of ſtrangers. We ſee how ſubmiſſive their ſlaves were to them, by the words of the Pſalmiſt, *As the eyes of ſervants look unto the hands of their maſters, even ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God.* From whence we may collect that they often gave orders by ſigns, and that ſervants were to watch their leaſt motions.

Levit. xxv. 39.

Exod. xxii. 3.

2 Kings iv. 1.

Exod. xxi. 2.

Levit. xxv. 40.

Pſ. cxxi. 2.

The Iſraelites had a power of life and death over their ſlaves, and this was then common

common to them with all nations. For slavery proceeded from the right they acquired by conquest in war, when, instead of killing their enemies, they chose rather to give them their lives, that they might have the use of them; so it was supposed the conqueror always reserved the power of taking away their lives, if they committed any thing that deserved it; that he acquired the same power over their children, because they had never been born, if he had not spared the father, and that he transmitted this power when he alienated his slave. This is the foundation of the absolute power of masters: and they seldom abused it, for their interest obliged them to preserve their slaves, who made part of their riches: which is the reason of the law, that he should not be punished who had smote a servant, *if he continued alive a day or two after.* *He is his money*, says the law, to shew that his loss was a sufficient punishment: and one may presume in this case that the master only intended his correction. But if the slave died under the strokes, it was to be supposed the master had a real design to kill him, for which the law declares him punishable; in which it was more merciful than the laws of other people, who did not

Just. de Jure Pers. § 3.

Exod. xxi. 20, 21.

Inſtit. de his qui ſui vel al. § 2. Inſt. quib. mod. jud. Pat. § 6.

make that diſtinction. The Romans, for more than five-hundred years, had a power to put their ſlaves to death, to impriſon their debtors upon default of payment, and to ſell their own children three times over before they were out of their power; and all by virtue of thoſe wiſe laws of the twelve tables which they brought from Greece, at the time when the Jews were reſtored after they returned from captivity, that is, about a thouſand years after Moſes.

Exod. xxi. 7. Per coemptionem. Iſaiah l. 1. Nehem. v. 2, 5.

As to the paternal power of the Hebrews, the law gave them leave to ſell their daughters; but the ſale was a ſort of marriage, as it was with the Romans. We ſee however by a paſſage in Iſaiah, that fathers ſold their children to their creditors: and in the time of Nehemiah the poor propoſed to ſell their children for ſomething to live upon, and others bewailed themſelves that they had not wherewith to redeem their children that were already in ſlavery. They had the power of life and death over their children, ſince the Wiſe man ſays, *Chaſten thy ſon whilſt there is hope, but perſiſt not in it to cauſe him to die.* Indeed they had not ſo much liberty as the Romans to make uſe of this ſevere privilege without the magiſtrates knowledge. The

Prov. xix. 18. See the Hebrew and the margin of our Bibles. Liv. lib. ii.

law

law of God only permitted the father and mother, after they had tried all ſorts of correction at home, to declare to the elders of the city, that their ſon was ſtubborn and rebellious, and upon their complaint he was condemned to death and ſtoned. The ſame law was practiſed at Athens, and founded upon children's lives being derived from their parents, and upon a ſuppoſition that none could be ſo unnatural as to put their children to death, unleſs they had committed ſome horrible crimes. Now the dread of this power was of great uſe in keeping children in perfect ſubjection.

Deut. xxi. 19.

Heliod. i.

We ſee but too many evils proceed from relaxing or rather taking away this paternal authority. Let a ſon be never ſo young, as he is married, or knows how to live without his father's aſſiſtance, he thinks he owes him no longer any thing but a little reſpect. Thence comes the infinite number of ſmall families and people that live alone, or in boarding-houſes, where all are equally maſters. Such young independent people, if they are rich, run into debauchery and ruin themſelves. If they are poor, they turn vagabonds whom nobody cares to own, and capable of all ſorts of villainy. Beſides the corruption of manners, this

this independency may alſo occaſion great diſorders in the ſtate: for it is much more difficult to rule a multitude of ſingle, untractable men, than a few heads of families, each of whom was reſponſible for a great number of perſons, and was commonly an old man that underſtood the laws.

CHAP. XXI.

The authority of old men.

NOT only fathers but all old men had great authority amongſt the Iſraelites, and all the people of antiquity. They every where, in the beginning, choſe judges for private affairs, and counſellors for the public, out of the oldeſt men *. From thence came the name of *Senate* and *Fathers* at Rome, and that great reſpect for old age which they borrowed from the Lacedemonians. Nothing is more conformable

* Though this perhaps may be true of the original inſtitution of the Jewiſh ſanhedrim and Roman ſenate; yet it is certain, in proceſs of time, neither aſſembly conſiſted of the *oldeſt*. *Patres* and *Seniores*, as with us *aldermen*, came to denote rank of dignity, not of age; as Selden obſerves de Synedriis, lib. i. c. 14. p. 1092, & lib. ii. c. 9. § 4. p. 1423, ed. fol.

to nature. Youth is only fit for motion and action. Old age is qualified to inſtruct, adviſe, and command. *The glory of young men is their ſtrength*, ſays Solomon, *and the beauty of old men is their grey head.* It is not likely that either ſtudy or good parts ſhould make up for want of experience in a young man. But an old man, provided he has good natural ſenſe, is wiſe by experience alone. All hiſtory proves that the beſt governed ſtates were thoſe where old men were in authority, and that the reigns of princes that were too young have been moſt unfortunate: which explains what the Wiſe man ſays, *Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child.* And it is this woe that God threatens the Jews with, when he tells them by Iſaiah, that *he will give them children for princes.* In reality youth has neither patience nor foreſight, is an enemy to all rule, and ſeeks nothing but pleaſure and variety.

Prov. xx. 29.

Eccles. x. 16.

Iſaiah iii. 4.

As ſoon as the Hebrews began to be formed into a people, they were governed by old men: when Moſes returned into Egypt to promiſe them that God would ſet them at liberty, he aſſembled the elders together, and performed the miracles, which were the proof of his miſſion before them. All the elders of Iſrael came to the feaſt that he made for Jethro

Exod. iv. 29.

Ibid. xviii. 12.

thro his father-in-law. When God thought fit to give him a council to relieve him in governing that great people, *Gather unto me*, ſaid he, *ſeventy men of the elders of Iſrael whom thou knoweſt to be the elders of the people and officers over them.* So that they had already authority before the law was given, and the ſtate had taken its form *. In the whole Scripture afterwards, as often as mention is made of aſſemblies and publick affairs, the elders are always put in the firſt place, and ſometimes named alone.

From thence comes the expreſſion in the Pſalms exhorting to praiſe God in *the congregation of the people* and in *the ſeat of the* elders,

Pſalm cvii. 32.

* This is a proof that the power, which we before mentioned to be given by Jacob to the heads of tribes, took place immediately upon his death. From that time all applications and meſſages are not to the people, but to the elders of Iſrael: Exod. iii. 16. xii. 21. The command of God, ſent to the *houſe of Jacob* and the *children* of *Iſrael* in Egypt, was delivered by Moſes to the *elders of the people*, Exod. xix. 3. 7. Biſhop Sherlock's third diſſertation, p. 304, 305. Whether the number of theſe *elders*, who made up the *Sanhedrim*, was juſt lxx or lxxii, it is allowed it was firſt formed out of Jacob's children, who went into Egypt, and that it always repreſented the twelve tribes. See Maldonat on Luc. xii. 1. Grot. in loc. and on Numb. xii. 1. and Selden de Synedriis, lib. II. c. iv. 8.

that

that is, the public council. Theſe are the two parts that compoſed all the antient commonwealths; *the aſſembly* (which the Greeks call ἐκκλησία, and the Latins *concio*) and *the ſenate*. The name of *elder* became afterwards a title of dignity: from the Greek word is derived the Latin name *preſbyter*; and, from the Latin word, the name of *ſeignior* or lord. We may judge of the age required by the Hebrews before a man was reckoned an elder, by thoſe being called *young men*, whoſe advice Rehoboam followed; for it is ſaid they had been educated with him; from whence it may be concluded they were about his age, who was then forty.

1 Kings xii. 8.

2 Chron. xii. 13.

CHAP. XXII.

Their adminiſtration of juſtice.

JUSTICE was adminiſtred by two ſorts of officers, *ſophetim* and *ſoterim*, eſtabliſhed in every city by the command which God gave by Moſes. It is certain the word *ſophetim* ſignifies *judges*: as to *ſoterim*, it is differently tranſlated by the Vulgate: but the Jewiſh tradition explains it of miniſters of juſtice, as ſheriffs, ſerjeants or their guards, and other officers. Theſe poſts were given to Levites,

Deut. xvi. 18.

Magiſtri, Præfecti, Duces, Præcones. Joſh. iii. 2.

1 Chron. xxvi. 29. Ibid. Levites, and there were ſix thouſand of them in David's time. Such were the judges

xxiii. 4. 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, 7. that Jehoſhaphat reſtored in each city, and to whom he gave ſuch good inſtructions; the

Ibid. 8. Scripture adds that he ſettled at Jeruſalem a company of Levites, prieſts and heads of

Deut. xvii. 8. families to be judges in great cauſes. It was the council of ſeventy elders erected in the time of Moſes, over which the high prieſt preſided, and where all queſtions were decided that were too hard to be determined by the

Cod. Sanhedr. c. i. 1, 6. &c. judges of ſmaller cities. The tradition of the Jews is that theſe judges of particular cities were twenty three in number, that they were all to meet to judge in capital caſes, and that three were ſufficient for cauſes of Meum and Tuum and things of leſs conſequence. The chief judge was the king, according to the

1 Sam. viii. 3. ſaying of the people to Samuel, *Give us a king to judge us.*

The place, where the judges kept their court, was the gate of the city: for as all the Iſraelites were huſbandmen, who went out in the morning to their work and came not in again till night, the city-gate was the place where moſt people met. We muſt not wonder that they wrought in the fields and abode in the cities. They were not ſuch as the chief

chief cities of our provinces, which can hardly be maintained by the produce of twenty or thirty leagues round them. They were only the habitations of as many labourers as were neceſſary to cultivate the ground neareſt hand. From whence it came that, the land being full of inhabitants, their cities were very numerous. The tribe of Judah only reckoned a hundred and fifteen to their ſhare, when they took poſſeſſion of it, beſides thoſe that were built afterwards, and each city had villages dependent upon it. Joſh. xv. 21.

They muſt certainly then be ſmall and very near one another, like common towns, well built and walled in, having in other reſpects, every thing that is to be found in the country.

The public place for doing buſineſs amongſt the Greeks and Romans was the market place or exchange for the ſame reaſon, becauſe they were all merchants. In our anceſtors time the vaſſals of each lord met in the court of his caſtle, and from thence comes the expreſſion, *the courts of princes.* As princes live more retired in the eaſt, affairs are tranſacted at the gate of their Seraglio; and this cuſtom of *making one's court* at the palace gate has been practiſed ever ſince the

the times of the antient kings of Perſia, as
Eſther ii. 19. iii. 2, 3. we ſee by ſeveral paſſages in the book of Eſther.

The gate of the city was the place for doing all publick and private buſineſs ever ſince the times of the patriarchs. Abraham purchaſed his burying place in the preſence of
Gen. xxiii. 10. 18. all thoſe that entered into the gate of the city of Hebron. When Hamor and his ſon Sichem, who ran away with Dinah, purpoſed to make an alliance with the Iſraelites, it was
Ibid. xxxiv. 20. at the city gates that they ſpake of it to the people. We ſee the manner of theſe publick acts, with all the particulars, in the ſtory of
Ruth iv. Ruth. Boaz, deſigning to marry her, was to have another perſon's right in her, who was a nearer relation, given up to him. For this purpoſe, he ſits at the gate of Bethlehem, and, ſeeing this kinſman paſs by, he ſtops him: then he takes ten of the elders of the city, and after they were all ſat down, he explained his pretenſions to them, and got the acknowledgment, which he deſired from his relation, with the formality preſcribed by the law; which was to pull off his ſhoe. He took not only the elders, but all the people for witneſſes, which ſhews a great number of ſpectators had got together: nor is it unlikely, that curioſity

curioſity made the people ſtop as they paſſed by. Their buſineſs was ſeldom in great haſte, they were all acquainted and all related, ſo it was natural for them to be concerned about each other's affairs.

Perhaps they took theſe acts down in writing: but the Scripture does not take notice of any, except in Tobit and Jeremiah a little before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. In Tobit there is mention made of a bond for money lent, of a marriage contract, and an inſtrument of covenants upon the ſame account. In Jeremiah, there is a contract upon a purchaſe. The law of Moſes preſcribes no writing except in caſe of divorce. But if they had not made uſe of any writings in thoſe early times, their contracts would have been very ſafe, ſince they were made in ſo publick a manner. If the kinſman of Boaz ſhould have denied that he had given up his right, all the inhabitants of Bethlehem could have convinced him of a falſhood. Some of them were preſent at it, and others muſt have heard it immediately after.

Tob. vii. 14. Jerem. xxxii. 10. Deut. xxiv. 1.

It was a long time before the cuſtom of putting private contracts into writing was introduced amongſt the Romans, as appears by the verbal obligation which they called

ſtipulation. They were not afraid of an action wanting proof, when they had pronounced a certain ſolemn form in the publick market place amongſt all the people, and taken ſome particular citizens to witneſs it, who were of reputable condition and unblemiſhed character. Theſe tranſactions were full as publick as thoſe amongſt us, that are done in private houſes before a publick notary, who often knows neither party, or before the town clerk and two hack witneſſes.

We may ſuppoſe the *gate* with the Hebrews, was the ſame thing as the ſquare or market-place with the Romans. The market for proviſions was held at the city-gate. Eliſha foretold that victuals ſhould be ſold cheap the day after, in the *gate* of Samaria. This gate had a ſquare, which muſt have been a large one, becauſe king Ahab aſſembled four hundred falſe prophets there. I ſuppoſe it was the ſame in other cities, and that theſe gates had ſome building with ſeats for the judges and elders. For it is ſaid, that Boaz went up to the gate, and ſat down there: And when David heard that Abſalom was dead, he went up to the chamber over the gate, to weep there. This chamber might be the place for private deliberations. Even in the temple of Jeru-

2 Kings vii. 1.

2 Sam. xviii. 33.

Jeruſalem, cauſes were tried at one of the gates, and the judges held their aſſizes there. Jerem. xxvi. 10.

After all theſe examples, it is not to be wondered that the Scripture uſes the word *gate* ſo often, to ſignify judgment, or the publick council of each city, or the city itſelf, or the ſtate; and that in the Goſpel, *the gates of hell* ſignify the kingdom or power of the devil.

But as openly and fairly as we may think the Iſraelites tranſacted their affairs, it muſt not be imagined, that they had no frauds and rogueries, unjuſt proſecutions, or falſe accuſations. Theſe are evils inſeparable from the corruption of human nature; and the more ſpirit and vivacity men naturally have, the more are they ſubject to them: but theſe evils are more peculiarly the growth of great cities. When David fled from Jeruſalem upon Abſalom's rebellion, he repreſents *Fury and Diſcord going about day and night within the walls thereof, Miſchief and Sorrow in the midſt of it, and Deceit and Guile in her ſtreets.* The prophets are full of ſuch reproaches: only one may imagine theſe evils were leſs common than they are now, becauſe there were fewer lawyers among them. Pſalm lv. 10, &c.

As temporal affairs, as well as ſpiritual, were governed by the law of God, there was no

diſtinction of tribunals: the ſame judges decided caſes of conſcience, and determined civil or criminal cauſes. Thus they had occaſion for but few different offices and officers, in compariſon of what we ſee now a-days. For we account it an uncreditable thing to be only a private man, and to have no other employment than improving our eſtate or governing our family. Every body is deſirous of ſome publick poſt, to enjoy honours, prerogatives, and privileges; and employments are conſidered as trades which are a livelihood, or as titles of diſtinction. But if we were to examine what publick offices only are really neceſſary, and the buſineſs done in them, we ſhould find that a few perſons would be ſufficient to execute them, and have ſpare time enough too for their private affairs.

This was the practice amongſt all the people of antiquity, and eſpecially the Hebrews. In Joſhua's time, we find but four ſorts of publick officers, *zakonim*, ſenators or elders; *raſſim*, chiefs; *ſophetim*, judges; and *ſoterim* inferior officers. When the kingdom was more flouriſhing in David's time, the following officers are mentioned; *ſix thouſand Levites, officers and judges*; *the heads of tribes*; *heads of families*, which are rather names of quality than

Joſh. xxiv. 1.

1 Chron. xxiii. 4.

than employment; *the heads of twelve corps* of twenty four thouſand men each; *the heads of one thouſand*, and of a hundred men; *the heads over thoſe that tenanted the king's demeſnes*, that is, his lands and cattle. I call thoſe *heads* here, whom the Hebrew calls *ſirim*, and the Latin *principes*. But I muſt obſerve, once for all, that it is impoſſible to expreſs the titles of offices and dignities in another language. Thus, neither the Greek nor Latin verſions give us a juſt idea of the Chaldean employments, taken notice of in Daniel, Ezekiel, and others. Dan. iii. 3. Ezek. xxiii. 23.

Beſides, amongſt David's officers they reckon his eunuchs, or domeſtick ſervants; for throughout the Scripture, the word *eunuch* is often taken for what we call a *valet de chambre*, or in general, for any ſervant employed about the king's perſon, without ſignifying any perſonal imperfection. *Captains over fifty men*, are likewiſe mentioned in other places. But we find nothing of *captains over tens*, except in the Law. Moſt of theſe poſts are military: and the reſt are but a trifle, if one conſiders the multitude of people, and the extent of David's kingdom.

CHAP. XXIII.

Their wars.

AFTER the adminiſtration of juſtice, we muſt ſpeak of war. There was not an Iſraelite that did not carry arms, the Prieſts and Levites not excepted. Benaiah the prieſt, ſon of Jehoiada, was one of the moſt renowned for bravery in David's army, and was general of Solomon's in the room of Joab. All were reckoned ſoldiers that were of age for ſervice; and that was at twenty years old and upwards. They were like the militia in ſome countries, always ready to aſſemble at the firſt notice. The difference is, that with us all eccleſiaſticks are forbidden the uſe of arms, and that we have moreover an infinite number of people unfit for war, lawyers, receivers of the king's revenues, citizens, merchants, and tradeſmen: whereas they were all huſbandmen and ſhepherds, inured from their childhood to labour and fatigue. Nor is it improbable that they uſed them to handle arms, at leaſt from the time of David and Solomon. Thus, at Rome, all the citizens of ſuch an age were obliged to ſerve a certain number of campaigns, when they were commanded;

2 Sam. xxiii. 20. 1 Kings ii. 35.

Numb. i. 3. 22.

2 Chron. viii. 9.

manded: from whence it comes that they did not uſe the expreſſion of *levying* troops, but called it *chooſing* them, becauſe they had always a great many more than they wanted. It was no difficult thing for the Iſraelites to ſubſiſt their armies; the country was ſo ſmall, and the enemy ſo near, that they often came back to lodge at home, or had but one or two days march. Delectum habere.

Their arms were nearly the ſame with thoſe of the Greeks and Romans: ſwords, bows and arrows, javelins and ſpears, that is to ſay, half pikes; for we muſt not imagine the antients had hand-ſpears, ſuch as our antient cavalry uſed. Their ſwords were broad and ſhort, and hung upon their thigh. They made uſe of ſlings, as we may inſtance in the men of Gibeah in Benjamin, who could have ſlung to a hair's breadth; and the ſame Gibeonites fought alike with both hands. Saul commonly held a javelin in his hand: Homer repreſents his heroes, and the Romans Quirinus, and their other gods in the ſame manner. But they did not wear any arms except upon duty, not ſo much as a ſword. When David ordered his men to march againſt Nabal, he firſt bids them *gird on their ſwords*, though they lived in a ſtate of continual alarm. Exod. xxxii. 27. Pſal. xlv. 3 Cant. iii. 8. Judg. xx. 16. 1 Sam. xviii. 10. and xix 9. 1 Sam. xxv. 13.

The cuſtom of always wearing a ſword by the ſide was peculiar to the Gauls and Germans.

For defenſive arms, they carried ſhields, bucklers, head-pieces, armour for the back and breaſt, and ſometimes greaves to cover the legs. We ſee an inſtance of a complete ſuit of armour in Goliah's, which was all braſs, like that of the Greeks in Homer. But it looks as if theſe arms were ſcarce, amongſt the Iſraelites, at that time, ſince king Saul offered to lend David his. They became common afterwards, and Uzziah had ſufficient to furniſh all his troops, which were more than three-hundred-thouſand men. The ſame king erected machines upon the towers on the walls of Jeruſalem to throw great ſtones and arrows, and fortified ſeveral cities as moſt other kings did. Thus war was carried on ſo early almoſt in the ſame manner as it was in later times, before the invention of fire-arms.

1 Sam. xvii. 5, 6. Ibid. 38.

2 Chron. xxvi. 14. Ibid. 15.

The Iſraelites had only infantry at firſt, and that was alſo the chief ſtrength of the Greeks and Romans. Cavalry is not ſo neceſſary * in hot countries, where they can

* The neglect of cavalry among the Iſraelites has afforded, to an excellent writer of this age, a ſtrong internal

always travel dry-ſhod: neither can they be of much uſe in mountains; but they are of great advantage in cold climates where the roads are dirty, and to make long marches over plains that are either barren or thinly inhabited, as in Poland and Tartary.

But they had cavalry under their kings, and the firſt ſign of Abſalom's revolt was raiſing horſes and chariots; and yet, when he had loſt the battle, he got upon a mule to have made his eſcape. Solomon, who could bear any expence, ſent for a vaſt number of horſes out of Egypt, and kept forty-thouſand of them, with twelve-thouſand chariots. Their

2 Sam. xviii. 9.

1 Kings iv. 26. 2 Chron. ix. 25.

proof of that people's being under the immediate guidance of a ſupernatural power. The prohibition is expreſs, Deut. xvii. *He* (that is, whoever ſhall be king of Iſrael) *ſhall not multiply horſes to himſelf, nor cauſe the people to return to Egypt.* Accordingly they proſpered or were defeated as they obeyed or tranſgreſſed this divine command; which, as he obſerves, it is *impoſſible to juſtify by the meaſures of human prudence.* See biſhop Sherlock's fourth diſſertat. Dr. Warburton, purſuing the ſame argument, obſerves, with our author, that even upon *political reaſons* the Jews might be juſtified in the diſuſe of cavalry in *defence* of their country, but not in *conquering* it from a warlike people who abounded in horſes. Here, at leaſt, the exertion of an extraordinary providence was wonderfully conſpicuous. See Div. Leg. Vol. II. Book iv. § 5.

chariots

chariots of war were probably, like thoſe of the Greeks, ſmall, with two wheels that would carry one or two men ſtanding upright or leaning upon the fore-part. The ſucceeding kings, who could not ſupport the great expence that Solomon did, ſent from time to time for ſuccours to Egypt, and upon theſe occaſions there is always mention made of horſes. The Jews muſt have had no cavalry in Hezekiah's time, by Rabſhekah's inſolence in ſaying to them, *Come in to my maſter's ſervice, the king of Aſſyria, and I will deliver thee two thouſand horſes, if thou be able on thy part to ſet riders upom them.*

2 Kings xviii. 23.

The Scripture informs us of no particulars relating to their military motions, the form of their battalions, or general order of battle, though it often ſpeaks of troops in battle array: but for the art of encamping and marching in good order, the journey through the wilderneſs is a noble example of it. The number of this prodigious army was known by exact liſts: each man was ſet down in his tribe, each tribe in it's quarter under one of the four heads, according to the order of birthright amongſt the patriarchs and the quality of their mothers. They marched, by ſound of trumpet, always in the ſame order, and

Numb. i. 2, &c.

and always quartered in the ſame ſituation about the tabernacle of the covenant, which was the center of the camp. They took all proper care for keeping their quarters clean, which was very neceſſary in ſo warm a country, and hard to be done in ſo vaſt a multitude. In ſhort, we ſee that the way of encamping, and every thing elſe that we admire with ſo much reaſon in the Greeks and Romans, was taken from the ancient models of the eaſtern people. The Hebrews ſet a high value upon their booty and ſpoils, as all the nations of antiquity did: they were marks of honour.

Num. v. 2, &c. Deut. xxiii 10, 11, &c.

From Joſhua's time to the kings, the command of armies belonged to thoſe whom the people choſe, or God raiſed up in an extraordinary manner, as Othoniel, Barach, and Gideon: But none were ſubject to them but the country of the people that choſe them, or to whom God gave them for deliverers. The reſt of the people abuſing their liberty often expoſed themſelves to the inſults of their enemies: which made them aſk for a king, not only to do them juſtice, but alſo to conduct their armies, and make war for them. From that time too they were in much more ſafety. The king called the people together when he judged

1 Sam. viii. 20.

judged it convenient, and always kept up a great number of forces. It is obſerved in the beginning of Saul's reign that he maintained three-thouſand men: David had twelve bodies of four and twenty-thouſand each, who ſerved monthly by turns. Jehoſhaphat had not a third part of David's kingdom; and yet he had eleven-hundred and ſixty-thouſand fighting men in his ſervice, without reckoning garriſons.

1 Sam. xiii. 2.

1 Chron. xxvii.

CHAP. XXIV.

Their kings.

THE king had power of life and death, and could put criminals to death without the formality of juſtice. David made uſe of this prerogative in the caſe of him that bragged he had killed Saul, and of thoſe that murdered Iſhboſheth. The Roman emperors had this power too. The kings of Iſrael levied tribute upon the Iſraelites themſelves, for Saul promiſes that all the family of the man that would fight Goliah ſhould be exempted from it: and it appears that Solomon had laid exceſſive taxes upon them by the complaints made to Rehoboam. The power of kings was in other reſpects very much limited:

2 Sam. i. 15. Ib. iv. 12.

1 Sam. xvii. 25.

1 Kings xii. 4.

mited: they were obliged to keep the law as well as private men, they could neither add to nor diminiſh it, and there is no inſtance of any of them making ſo much as one new law. Their way of living at home was very plain, as we may ſee by the deſcription that Samuel gave of their manners to put the people out of conceit with them; he allows them only women for the houſehold affairs. Yet they had a great attendance when they appeared in publick. Amongſt the ſigns of Abſalom's rebellion, the Scripture reckons fifty men that ran before him, and the ſame is ſaid of his brother Adonijah.

1 Sam. viii. 11.

2 Sam. xv. 1. 1 Kings i. 5.

The kings lived ſparingly as well as private people: the difference was, they had more land and herds. When David's riches are reckoned up indeed, his treaſures of gold and ſilver are put into the account; but ſo are his tillage, and vineyards, his ſtores of wine and oil, his plantations of olive and fig-trees, his herds, and kine, camels, aſſes, and ſheep. Thus Homer deſcribes the riches of Ulyſſes; he ſays he had twelve great herds of each ſort of cattle upon the continent, beſides what he had in his Iſland. They took out of this great ſtock what was neceſſary to maintain their houſhold. There were, in Solomon's time,

1 Chron. xxvii. 25, &c.

Odyſſ. xiv.

1 Kings iv. 7.

time, twelve overſeers diſtributed through the land of Iſrael, who, each in their turn, ſent monthly proviſions for the table, which for one day were *thirty meaſures of fine flour, and threeſcore meaſures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty out of the paſtures, and a hundred ſheep, beſides harts and roebucks and fallow deer and fatted fowl*, enough to feed at leaſt five-thouſand people. As this proviſion was the product of the country itſelf, there was no need to buy any thing, nor any want of purveyors, treaſurers, or comptrollers, nor that vaſt number of officers, which eat up great lords; ſo that gold and ſilver continued laid up, or ſerved for it's moſt natural uſe, to make plate and furniture of.

1 Kings iv. 22, &c.

From thence came the vaſt riches of David and Solomon. David prepared all that was neceſſary for building the temple, the value of which came to a hundred and eight-thouſand talents of gold, and a million and ten-thouſand talents of ſilver; which is eleven-thouſand ſix-hundred and ſixty-nine millions, ſix-hundred and ſixty-eight-thouſand livres, and ſomething more; that is, about five-hundred and thirty-four millions, eight-hundred and fifty-nine-thouſand, ſeven-hundred and eighty-four pounds ſterling. Beſides he cauſed great

1 Chron. xxix.

Ibid. xxii. 14. In orig. only 100,000 tal. of gold

great treaſures to be laid up in his ſepulchre. Solomon built a great number of palaces, fortified ſeveral cities, and finiſhed ſeveral public works. All the plate and furniture of his houſe at mount Libanus was of pure gold; beſides two-hundred golden targets, each of which was worth thirteen-thouſand livres, that is, about five-hundred and ninety-ſix pound; or a hundred and nineteen thouſand two-hundred pound ſterling in all; and three-hundred bucklers, worth ſix-thouſand livres or two-hundred and ſeventy five pound a piece: which amounts to about eighty-two-thouſand five-hundred pound ſterling. 1 Kings x. 16, 17.

His revenues too were great. Commerce alone brought him in every year ſix-hundred and ſixty-ſix talents of gold; which make above forty-three millions of livres; or one million, nine-hundred and ſeventy-thouſand, eight-hundred and thirty-four pound ſterling. He made the Iſraelites pay tribute, and all foreigners that were under his dominion, the Hivites, the Amorites, and all the other antient inhabitants of the land of Iſrael, the Idumeans, great part of Arabia, and all Syria: for his empire extended from the borders of Egypt to the Euphrates: and all the countries, that were ſo rich, ſent him every year

year veſſels of gold and ſilver, cloth, arms, perfumes, horſes, and mules. Theſe reflexions may ſerve to make one underſtand how Crœſus came by his riches in a kingdom about the ſame bigneſs as Solomon's. Silver and gold were not yet diſperſed through the world. There was but little in Greece, none in Italy and the reſt of Europe, except Spain, where they had ſome mines.

Let us ſtand ſtill a little to conſider the proſperity of Solomon, for it is an agreeable contemplation. If we were to read all hiſtory through, we ſhould not find one example of ſuch a perfect conjunction of all the good things that are to be enjoyed in this world: a young prince in the flower of his age, of a handſome perſon, of great parts, learning, and accompliſhments; in ſuch reputation for wiſdom that *all the kings of the earth ſought to hear him*; and a queen came in perſon from a great diſtance. He was maſter of a large kingdom in profound peace, inhabited the fineſt country in the world, had the moſt magnificent palaces, and numerous attendance, was loaded with riches, ſwimming in pleaſures, denying himſelf nothing, as he owns, and employing all his vaſt genius to ſatisfy his deſires. This we ſhould call a happy

1 Kings x. 24.

Ibid. 1.

Eccles. ii. 10.

happy man according to our natural ideas. Yet it is certain, he was not ſo, becauſe he was not content. He himſelf ſays, that he found pleaſure and joy were only illuſion, and that *all his labour was but vanity and vexation of ſpirit*. Eccles. ii. 10.

By this proſperity of Solomon and his people, God gave two important leſſons to mankind at the ſame time. Firſt, he ſhews his faithfulneſs in accompliſhing his promiſes by giving the Iſraelites ſo plentifully of all the good things which he had promiſed their fathers in the poſſeſſion of this land; that nobody hereafter might doubt of his power to reward thoſe that adhere to him and keep his commandments. Men, that applied themſelves ſo entirely to earthly things, ſtood in need of ſuch an earneſt to make them believe they ſhould hereafter enjoy an inviſible happineſs, and the recompence of another life. But beſides, by granting the Iſraelites the poſſeſſion of theſe ſenſual pleaſures, and profuſely heaping on them whatever might contribute to the happineſs of this life, God has given all men an opportunity of ſeeing them in a true light and conceiving higher hopes. For who under the ſun can pretend to be happy, if Solomon was not? who can doubt

that, whatever happens in this world, is vanity, after *He* has confeſſed it? Does not this example ſhew us plainly that worldly goods are not only vain, but dangerous? not only incapable of ſatisfying the heart of man, but likely to corrupt it? What reaſon have *We* to flatter ourſelves that we ſhall make a better uſe of them than a people ſo dear to God, and ſo well inſtructed in their duty? who ſeem to have had a better right to this ſort of happineſs, ſince it was propoſed to them as a reward? What preſumption would it be to think ourſelves more capable of reſiſting pleaſures than the wiſe Solomon? He gave himſelf up ſo much to the love of women, that he had a thouſand of them, though a multiplicity was abſolutely forbidden by the law of God: And his complaiſance to them carried him even to idolatry; his ſubjects followed his bad example, and after his reign the manners of the Iſraelites grew worſe and worſe.

Deut. xvii. 17.

The diviſion of the two kingdoms of Iſrael and Judah ſtill augmented the evil. The corruption was much the greateſt in Iſrael, where idolatry always prevailed, which is the fountain of all ſorts of wickedneſs: rebellion and treaſon were common there. In Judah the crown never went out of the family of David:

Wiſdom xiv. 27.

David: there were ſeveral pious kings in it. The Prieſts and Levites, who retired thither, preſerved the tradition of the true religion and a more pure practice of the law.

In theſe later times, the law being deſpiſed, they had frequent intercourſe with ſtrangers, chiefly to procure ſuccours in war: and this is the reaſon of their being ſo frequently reproached by the prophets with their want of truſt in God. The ſtrangers, whoſe alliance they courted moſt, were the Aſſyrians and Egyptians, the two moſt powerful nations of thoſe times. To pleaſe them, they imitated their cuſtoms and idolatry: and the ruin of the Iſraelites followed the fortune of theſe nations, when Egypt fell, and Aſſyria got the ſuperiority.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

The Jews. Their captivity.

THIS is what appeared to me the moſt remarkable in the manners of the Iſraelites, whilſt they lived at full liberty in their own country, without mixing with ſtrangers, or being ſubject to infidels. Let us now take a view of their laſt ſtate, from the Babyloniſh captivity to their entire diſperſion. Though they were ſtill the ſame people and their manners the ſame in the main, there was however a great alteration in both.

Firſt, they are called only *Jews* in theſe later times, becauſe, in reality, there was no kingdom but that of Judah ſubſiſting. Samaria had been deſtroyed, and Salmanaſar had taken the ten tribes captive, which bore the name of Iſrael above a hundred years before the ruin of Jeruſalem. And though the kingdom of Judah comprehended the two whole tribes of Benjamin and Levi, and many particular perſons of all the reſt, whom a religious zeal had brought thither after Jeroboam's

boam's ſchiſm, all was confounded in the name of Judea and Jews, and ſo they were uſually called before the captivity. 2 Kings xvi. 6.

As the kingdom manifeſtly tended to it's ruin, after the death of Joſiah, great numbers of Jews were diſperſed on all ſides, and retired to the Ammonites, Moabites, Idumeans, and other neighbouring people. The Chaldeans carried away captive the moſt conſiderable of thoſe who dwelt at Jeruſalem, when it was taken, and left none but the poorer ſort to till the ground: this remnant too went into Egypt a little while after. Jerem. xli. 10. Jerem. xliii.

As to thoſe that were carried to Babylon, they were ſervants to the king and his ſons, as the Scripture tells us: for ſuch was the law of war at that time. All that were taken in arms, all the inhabitants of a town carried by ſtorm, or ſurrendered at diſcretion, and of the adjacent country, which depended upon it, were ſlaves to the conquerors. They were either the property of the public, or that particular perſon that had taken them, according to the laws concerning the acquiſition or diviſion of ſpoil then ſubſiſting in each country. Thus, at the taking of Troy, all that remained alive were made ſlaves, not ex- 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20.

cepting queen Hecuba and the princeſſes her daughters.

The Greek and Roman hiſtory are full of ſuch examples; the Romans loaded thoſe kings with chains that reſiſted obſtinately; or put them to death, after they had made them appear at their triumph. They ſold the common people by auction, and divided their lands amongſt their own citizens, whom they ſent to eſtabliſh colonies there: which was the certain way to ſecure their conqueſts. Neither the Jews nor Iſraelites were ſo hardly uſed by the Aſſyrians. Some had great liberty allowed them, as Tobit by king Ene-
Tob. i. 14. meſſar; and there were ſome rich amongſt them, as Tobit himſelf, his kinſman Raguel,
Hiſt. of Suſanna 4. and his friend Gabael; and at Babylon Joachim, Suſanna's huſband. It appears likewiſe by the ſtory of Suſanna, that the Jews, nothwithſtanding their captivity, had the exerciſe of their laws and appointed judges of life and death.

However it was impoſſible but this mingling with ſtrangers ſhould cauſe ſome change in their manners, ſince one of their chief maxims was to ſeparate themſelves from all other nations. Many were prevailed upon to wor-

ſhip

ſhip idols, eat forbidden food, and marry wives from amongſt ſtrangers, and all conformed to their maſters in indifferent things, one of which was their language. Thus, during the ſeventy years that the captivity laſted, they forgot Hebrew, and none but the learned underſtood it, as the Latin amongſt us. Their vulgar tongue was the Syriac or Chaldee, ſuch as is that in Daniel, and the paraphraſes upon Scripture that were compoſed afterwards, that the people might underſtand it. They changed their letters too, and, inſtead of the old ones which the Samaritans have preſerved, took the Chaldean, which we call the Hebrew.

CHAP. II.

The return of the Jews, and their condition under the Perſians.

WHEN Cyrus gave them their liberty, with leave to go back into Judea and rebuild the temple, they did not all return, nor at one time. There was a great number that ſtayed at Babylon and in all places where they were ſettled: And they that came back were not all Jews: ſome few of the ten tribes joined themſelves to them,

and yet they made but a ſmall number altogether. The firſt, that Zorobabel conducted, did not amount to fifty thouſand, with the ſervants that attended them: and one may ſee their poverty by the ſmall number of their ſervants and cattle. What compariſon is there betwixt fifty thouſand ſouls, and what there muſt have been in the time of Jehoſhaphat to make up twelve-hundred-thouſand fighting men? There came beſides with Ezra about fifteen hundred, and we may ſuppoſe there were ſeveral other companies.

Ezra ii. 64.

Ezra viii.

They did what they could to diſcover their former inheritances, and preſerve each family's ſhare. Upon this account Ezra collected all the genealogies that are at the beginning of the Chronicles, where he chiefly enlarges upon the three tribes of Judah, Levi, and Benjamin, and carefully ſets down their habitations. To people Jeruſalem, they received all that would come and ſettle there, which confounded, no doubt, the order of their ſhares. Beſides, it was juſt, that ſuch as were preſent ſhould take poſſeſſion of their lands, who had no mind to return, or perhaps were not in being. So, in the later times, Joſeph dwelt at Nazareth in Galilee, though his family was originally of Bethlehem:

Nehem. xi. 3.

hem: and Anna the propheteſs lived at Jeruſalem. But ſtill they knew what tribe they were of, and carefully preſerved their genealogies, as we ſee by Joſeph's who was only a poor artificer. They likewiſe carefully diſtinguiſhed the true Iſraelites from ſtrangers that had been admitted into their ſociety, whom they called *giores* in their own tongue and *proſelytes* in Greek. African. apud Euſ. Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. i. c. 7.

Thus one of their firſt concerns, after their reſtoration, was to ſeparate themſelves from ſtrangers, and to make the prohibitions of the law, relating to marriages with infidels, obſerved: which they extended even to nations not ſpecified in the law; namely, to the people of Azotus, who were part of the Philiſtines; to the Egyptians, Ammonites, and Moabites. The evils that the Jews were ſenſible they had received from theſe marriages, ſince the bad example of Solomon, inclined the wiſe men to interpret the law in this ſenſe, and extend it rather byond the import of the letter, that they might more effectually fulfil the intention of it. The prieſts were moſt ſtrict in obſerving theſe prohibitions: they married none but women of their own tribe, and Joſephus has informed us of the precautions uſed about it even in his time. In general Ezra ix. 1, &c. Cont. App. l. i. c. 2.

general the Jews were never ſo faithful to God; and, after they returned from captivity, we never hear idolatry once mentioned amongſt them. So much were they ſtruck with that ſevere puniſhment, and the accompliſhment of the prophecies that threatened them with it. Indeed, apoſtates were entirely at liberty to ſtay among the Infidels: ſo that there appeared none but ſuch as were really Jews,

Under the firſt kings of Perſia, they were ſtill very weak, envied by the ſtrangers their neighbours, eſpecially the Samaritans, expoſed to their inſults and calumnies, and in danger of having their throats cut upon the leaſt ſignification of the king's pleaſure; as we ſee by the cruel edict that Haman obtained againſt them, from the effects of which they were ſaved by queen Eſther. They could not finiſh the rebuilding of the temple, 'till twenty years after their firſt coming back, nor raiſe the walls of Jeruſalem again, under ſixty years more; ſo they were fourſcore years in renewing the whole. The country muſt have been very poor, ſince Herodotus, who lived at that time, comprehends Syria, Phœnicia, Paleſtine, and the iſle of Cyprus under one ſingle government, that paid Darius but three hundred and fifty talents tribute, which was no more than was paid by one of the leaſt provinces: whereas

Eſther iii. 8, &c.

Herod. lib. iii.

whereas that of Babylon alone paid a thouſand. This revenue was doubled in the time of the Romans for Paleſtine alone: it brought in to Herod and his ſons ſeven hundred and ſixty talents, which, to compute by the ſmaller talent, amount to more than fifteen hundred thouſand livres, that is, about ſixty eight thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty pound ſterling. Joſeph. Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 4.

By little and little, the Jews were eſtabliſhed again, and, during the reign of the Perſians, they lived under their own laws, in the form of a commonwealth, governed by the high prieſt, and the council of ſeventy one elders. The country was repeopled, the towns new-built, and the lands better cultivated than ever. Plenty was ſeen again, and there was ſuch a profound peace and tranquillity, that, for near three hundred years, there happened no commotions, nor any thing that makes the common ſubject of hiſtories: and from thence proceeds that great void that we find betwixt the time of Nehemiah and the Maccabees. The temple was honoured even by ſtrangers, who viſited it, and brought offerings thither. In ſhort, the proſperity of the Jews was ſo great after their return, that the prophets, in foretelling it, have left us the moſt magnificent types of the Meſſiah's reign. Philo, leg.

The

The Greeks began then to be acquainted with the Jews in Egypt and Syria, whither they often travelled: and they made great uſe of this correſpondence, if we may believe the moſt antient Chriſtian authors, as Juſtin Martyr, and Clemens of Alexandria; for they aſſure us, that the Greek poets, lawgivers, and philoſophers, learnt the beſt part of their doctrine from the Jews. Indeed Solon travelled into Egypt, and the laws, that he gave to the Athenians, were very like thoſe of Moſes. Pythagoras had been long in Egypt, and went to Babylon in the time of Cambyſes: he had therefore ſeen the Jews, and might have converſed with them. Plato ſtudied many years in Egypt, and makes Socrates ſpeak ſo many excellent things, founded upon the principles taught by Moſes, that he may juſtly be ſuppoſed to have known ſomething of them.

The beſt things that he teaches in his laws and commonwealth, the Jews really practiſed; as living by one's own induſtry, without luxury, without ambition, without having it in our power to undo ourſelves or grow too rich, eſteeming juſtice the greateſt of all bleſſings, and avoiding all novelty and change. In the perſons of Moſes, David, and Solomon,

we

we diſcover examples of the wiſe man, whom he wiſhed for to govern a ſtate and make it happy, which he ſcarce hoped would ever come to paſs. He mentions certain traditions of venerable antiquity, in ſeveral places, without ſupporting them with any proof, relating to the judgment of mankind after death, and the ſtate of the other life, which are manifeſtly doctrines of the true religion. If Plato and the other Greeks had not learnt theſe truths immediately from the Jews, they had them at leaſt from other people of the eaſt, who being nearer the origin of mankind, and having writings much antienter than the Greeks, had preſerved many more traditions of the firſt men, tho' obſcured and involved in fables.

Plato de Repub. vi. & x. in fine.

CHAP. III.

The ſtate of the Jews under the Macedonians.

THE conqueſts of Alexander made the Jews much better known to the Greeks, to whom they became ſubject. Joſephus brings proofs of it from the teſtimony of Clearchus, a diſciple of Ariſtotle, and Hecatæus the Abderite. They continued to live according to their own laws, under the protec-

Joſeph. cont. App. ii. 2.

tion of the Macedonian kings, as they had done under the Perſians: but as their country lay betwixt Syria and Egypt, they ſometimes obeyed the king of one of thoſe nations, and ſometimes the king of the other, as they were ſtrongeſt: and they were well or ill uſed by them according to the humour or intereſt of the kings, or the credit of their enemies. Alexander the Great, being convinced of their affection and fidelity, gave them the province of Samaria, and exempted it from tribute; and, when he built Alexandria, ſettled ſome Jews in it, granting them the ſame privileges as the other citizens, till at laſt they alſo were called Macedonians. Indeed, the firſt of the Ptolemys having taken Jeruſalem by ſurprize, carried great numbers of the Jews captives into Egypt, who were ſpread as far as Cyrene. But afterwards, finding how religious they were, and faithful to their oaths, he put ſome of them into his garriſons, and treated them ſo well, that it drew many more into that country. His ſon Philadelphus redeemed all the Jews that were ſlaves in his dominions, and ſent great preſents to Jeruſalem to procure that tranſlation which he got made of their law.

Joſeph, Ant. xii. 1. & cont. App. l. ii. c. 2.

Ibid. Ant. xii. 2.

They

They were alſo favoured by ſeveral kings of Syria. Seleucus Nicanor gave them the right of citizens in the cities which he built in Aſia Minor, and Cœle-Syria, and even in Antioch his capital, with privileges that they alſo enjoyed under the Romans. Antiochus the Great, having received ſignal ſervices from the Jews, granted conſiderable favours and immunities to the city of Jeruſalem; and to ſecure Lydia and Phrygia, which were not quite ſtanch in their allegiance, he eſtabliſhed colonies of Jews there, giving them lands to cultivate and build upon. Joſeph. Ant. xii. 3.

The firſt privilege, that the Jews always aſked upon theſe occaſions, was liberty to exerciſe their religion and obſerve their law. But as for the reſt, they could not avoid learning many Grecian cuſtoms, as they had Chaldean and others, and particularly the Greek tongue, which was then become vulgar throughout all the eaſt, and continued ſo as long as the Roman empire laſted there. From thence it came that many took Greek names, as Ariſtobulus, Philon, Andreas, and Philippus; or Hebrew names diſguiſed with Greek terminations, as Jaſon for Jeſus, Simon for Simeon, Hieroſolyma for Jeruſalem.

It

It was probably about this time that the Jews paſſed the ſeas and ſettled in Europe. For they that underſtood the Greek tongue, and had reſided amongſt that people in Aſia, Syria, and Egypt, might eaſily live in any part of the Grecian empire, even in Macedonia and Achaia, according as they found it more convenient, or they enjoyed greater liberty. Thus St. Paul found great numbers of them in all the cities of Greece, when he went to preach the goſpel there, about two hundred and fifty years after the time of Antiochus the Great. Theſe Jews were half Greeks, which the eaſtern Jews called *Helleniſts*; and they gave the Gentiles the name of *Hellenes*, which properly ſignifies Greeks; whence it comes, that, in St. Paul's Epiſtles, Greek and Gentile ſignify the ſame thing.

Rom. i. 16. ii. 10, &c.

The Jews could not be ſo mixed with the Greeks without the latter, who were very curious at that time, getting ſome knowledge of their religion and laws, eſpecially after the tranſlation of the ſacred books. Their wiſe men and true philoſophers held them in great eſteem, as we may judge by what Strabo wrote about them long after. All admired the magnificence of their temple, and exact order of their ceremonies. Agrippa himſelf, the

Strabo lib. xvi.

ſon-

ſon-in-law of Auguſtus, was aſtoniſhed at it. But moſt of the Greeks at that time, I mean in the reign of the Macedonians, were not capable of reliſhing the cuſtoms and maxims of the Jews. They were too grave for people whom the Aſiatic luxury had made effeminate, and whoſe ſole employment was in * trifles. There were indeed a great number of philoſophers; but moſt of them contented themſelves with only diſcourſing upon virtue, and exerciſing themſelves in diſputation. All the reſt of the Greeks were poſſeſſed with curioſity and a fondneſs for the *belles lettres:* ſome applied themſelves to rhetoric, others to poetry and muſick. Painters, ſculptors, and architects were in great repute. Others ſpent all their time in gymnaſticks to form their bodies and make them good wreſtlers. Others ſtudied geometry, aſtronomy, and natural philoſophy. There were every where virtuoſi, connoiſſeurs, curious, and idle people of all ſorts.

† The manners of the Romans were at that time much more ſolid. They applied them-

* Ut primum poſitis nugari Græcia bellis
Cœpit, &c. Horat. l. ii. Ep. i. 93.

† Romæ dulce diu fuit & ſolenne recluſâ
Mane domo vigilare, &c. Hor. ibid. 103.

ſelves to nothing but agriculture, the knowledge of the laws and war, and willingly left the glory of excelling in curious arts and ſciences to the Greeks: that they might have the more time to extend their conqueſts and attend to the government of their ſubjects, making politicks, as * Virgil ſays, their principal concern. The Jews were ſtill a great deal more ſerious, as they made morality and the ſervice of God their chief ſtudy. We have a good example of it in the book of Eccleſiaſticus, written about the ſame time. Yet this was the reaſon that the Greeks looked upon them as an ignorant people, ſeeing they would learn nothing but their own law. They called them *Barbarians*, as they did all nations that were not Greeks, and deſpiſed them more than any other ſtrangers upon account of their religion, which appeared to them auſtere and abſurd †. They ſaw them refrain from debauchery, not out of frugality and policy, but a principle of conſcience: this appeared to them too ſtrict, and they were particularly offended at their ſabbaths, their faſts, and diſtinction of meats. They accounted them enemies to all mankind. *They live*

Joſ. cont. App. l. i. c. 4. & l. ii. c. 6. Orig. cont. Celſ. l. v.

* Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius æra, &c.
Æneid. vi. 847.

† Judæorum mos triſtis abſurduſque. Tacit. hiſt. v. init.

ſeparate

ſeparate from every body elſe, ſays a Greek philoſopher, *having nothing common with us, neither altar, offerings, prayers, nor ſacrifices. They are at a greater diſtance from us than the inhabitants of Suſa, Bactria, and India.* Philoſt. vit. Apol. lib. v. c. 11.

We may add to this that the fear of idolatry made the Jews reject ſculpture and painting, (which arts the Greeks held in ſo much eſteem) as uſeleſs, ridiculous pieces of workmanſhip, and the fruits of idleneſs: which is the reaſon that idols are ſo often called *vanity* in Scripture, to ſhew they are vain things, that have only a deceitful outſide, and ſerve to no manner of good purpoſe. They are alſo called an *abomination*, becauſe they cannot be ſufficiently deteſted, when we conſider the ſtupidity that attributes the incommunicable name of God to them. For the ſame reaſon, the Jews could not hear, without horror, the impious fables which the Greek poets were filled with. Thus they drew upon themſelves the hatred of the Grammarians, whoſe profeſſion it was to explain them; and of the Rhapſodiſts, who made a trade of ſinging their heroic poems in publick; and of the actors of tragedies and comedies, and of all others, whoſe livelyhood depended upon poetry and falſe theology. Orig. cont. Celſ. l. iv. Iſaiah xliv. 10. Jerem. x. 15. Wiſdom xiii. 13.

Joſeph. cont. App. The Jews indeed made it a rule not to laugh at other nations, nor to ſay any thing diſreſpectful of their gods. But it was ſcarce poſſible that ſome word of contempt ſhould not eſcape from them. Now how angry muſt a Greek Grammarian have been, if he had heard a Jew repeat a paſſage out of the Prophets againſt idols; if he had heard him aſſert that Homer was a falſe prophet and impoſtor, or ridicule the abſurdities that occur in the genealogies, the amours and crimes of their Gods? How could they bear any one's ſhewing an abhorrence of the ſcandalous impurities of the theatre, and the abominable ceremonies of Bacchus and Ceres; in a word, hear him maintain that the God of the Jews was the only true God, and that they only, of all the people upon earth, were in poſſeſſion of the right religion and morality? They deſpiſed them the more for not knowing how to make learned harangues or diſpute in form, and becauſe, for a proof of theſe great truths, they chiefly alledged facts, that is to ſay, the great miracles that God had wrought in the ſight of their fathers. Now the common people amongſt the Greeks did not make any diſtinction betwixt thoſe miracles and the prodigies which they alſo related in their fables: and

and philoſophers thought them impoſſible, because they only reaſoned from the laws of nature, which they held to be abſolutely fixed and unalterable. Galen. de uſu Partium.

This being the diſpoſition of the Greeks, they liſtened the more eagerly to the calumnies of the Phœnicians, Egyptians, and other enemies of the Jews. And from thence proceeded thoſe impertinent ſtories that Tacitus tells us ſo gravely, when he is explaining the origin of the Jews, and has a mind to act the learned hiſtorian; and which are to be met with likewiſe in Juſtin, who had had the ſame information. Strabo does not ſeem to know much more of the matter, though he treats it more ſenſibly. Hiſt. l. v. init. Lib. xvi.

But beſides theſe ſlanders, which might eaſily have been overlooked, the Greeks proceeded to violence and perſecution. Thus Ptolemy Philopator, after he had loſt the battle of Raphia, diſcharged his wrath upon the Jews: and his ſon Epiphanes, being provoked at their not letting him go into the ſanctuary, would have them expoſed to elephants, as it is related in the Maccabees. Under Seleucus Philopator king of Syria, Heliodorus came to plunder the ſacred treaſure, and nothing but a miracle prevented his doing it. 2 Macc. iii. 7, &c.

1 Macc. i. &c. At laſt, under Antiochus Epiphanes began the greateſt perſecution they ever ſuffered, and which is not inferior to any that the Chriſtians have endured ſince. Thus the church reckons thoſe, who died at that time for the law of God, amongſt her martyrs.

Martyrol. Rom. Aug. 1.

They are the firſt we know of, who laid down their lives in that good cauſe. The three companions of Daniel, when they were caſt into the furnace, and he himſelf, by being expoſed to the lions, had all the merit of martyrdom; but God wrought miracles to preſerve them. Eleazar, the ſeven brethren, and the reſt that are mentioned in the hiſtory of the Maccabees really gave up their lives for the ſake of God and the law of their fathers, which is the firſt example, that I know, of this kind of virtue in the whole hiſtory of the world. We ſee no Infidel, not even one of the philoſophers, who choſe to ſuffer death and the moſt cruel puniſhment, rather than violate their religion or the laws of their country.

Dan. iii. 21.

2 Macc. vi. 18. and c. vii.

Joſephus boldly reproaches the Gentiles with it; *Many captives*, ſays he, *of our nation have ſuffered all ſorts of torment and death in the theatres, and upon divers occaſions, rather than ſpeak the leaſt word againſt the Law and the other*

Contra App. l. i.

other Scriptures: but where is the Greek that would not let all the books of his nation be burnt rather than ſuffer any harm himſelf?

Indeed ſome Jews were overcome by perſecution: but then they entirely renounced their religion and laws, and uſed artifice to diſguiſe their circumciſion: ſo that they were no longer accounted Jews. And ſuch as continued faithful were ſo zealous for their law and liberty, that, at laſt, they took up arms to defend themſelves againſt the Syrian kings. Theſe princes openly violated all the privileges that had been granted to the Jews by the kings of Perſia, and confirmed by Alexander and the other Macedonian kings, and ſeemed determined to aboliſh the true religion, which was ſtill at that time confined to a particular people and country.

CHAP. IV.

The reign of the Aſmoneans.

WE are now come to the time of the Maccabees, when the Jewiſh nation raiſed itſelf up again and ſhone with a new luſtre. They were no longer a poor people, that aſpired no higher than to live in peace under the conduct of their high-prieſt and

elders, whoſe happineſs only conſiſted in being at liberty to cultivate their lands and ſerve God in their own way. They became a ſtate entirely independent, ſupported by good troops, ſtrong garriſons, and alliances, not only with the neighbouring princes, but with remote kingdoms, even Rome itſelf. The kings of Egypt and Syria, who had uſed them ſo ill, were forced afterwards to court their friendſhip. They alſo made conqueſts: John Hyrcanus took Sichem and Gerizim, and deſtroyed the temple of the Samaritans; ſo abſolute was he over all the land of Iſrael. He extended his dominions into Syria, where he conquered ſeveral towns, after the death of Antiochus Sidetes; and into Idumæa, which he ſo entirely ſubdued, that he obliged the inhabitants to be circumciſed and obſerve the law of Moſes, as being incorporated into the nation of the Jews. His ſon Ariſtobulus added the enſigns of royalty to the real power, taking the diadem and title of king: and Alexander Jannæus made ſtill greater conqueſts.

1 Macc. xiv. 4. and 18.

Joſeph. Ant. xiii. 17.

Ibid. c. 20, 21, 22.

But this glory of the Jews was of ſhort continuance: for, though the weakening the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria had ſerved to exalt them, the entire ruin of thoſe two kingdoms brought on theirs too by the vaſt addition

addition it made to the Roman power. Indeed, the beginning of their decay was occaſioned by their domeſtic quarrels and the continual miſunderſtandings betwixt the two ſons of Alexander Jannæus, Hyrcanus and Ariſtobulus. In ſhort, they had enjoyed their liberty but fourſcore years, ſince Simon had been declared head of the nation after caſting off the Grecian yoke, till Pompey, invited by Hyrcanus, took Jeruſalem, entered into the temple, and made the Jews tributaries.

After that, they were in a miſerable condition for above twenty years: divided by the parties of the two brothers, and plundered by the Romans, who took from them, at different times, above ten thouſand talents, which is about forty millions of livres, or one million, eight-hundred and thirty-three-thouſand, three hundred and fifty pounds ſterling. After the defeat of Brutus and Caſſius, the Parthians taking advantage of Marc Anthony's weakneſs, who was governor of the eaſt, made themſelves maſters of Syria and Paleſtine, and took Hyrcanus captive. Ibid. xiv. 8, 12.

During all the time of the Roman civil wars, and whilſt the Parthians had the better of them, Paleſtine was expoſed to cruel ravages by ſo many armies of different nations paſſing

paſſing through it, and by the incurſions of neighbouring people, particularly the Arabians.

Ibid. xv. It is true, it recovered again a little under Herod: he brought back peace and plenty to it: he was powerful, rich, and lived in great ſtate. But it cannot be ſaid the Jews were free in his time. He was not ſo himſelf, and depended entirely upon the Roman emperors. He was a foreigner, by birth an Idumean, had no religion, and only kept up the appearance of it to ſerve political purpoſes.

Ibid. c. 2. He deſtroyed the ſucceſſion of the high-prieſts, ſending for one Hananiel from Babylon, a deſpicable man, though of the ſacerdotal family: after whom they had no high-prieſts but ſuch, and as many, as the kings pleaſed.

When Herod was dead, there was no longer any power in Judea. His ſons only kept part of his kingdom, and that not long. Judea had Roman governors depending upon the proconſul of Syria. At laſt the Jews were baniſhed out of it, and reduced to their preſent condition. This therefore is the laſt time that any account is to be made of them, as a nation, from their liberty under Simon and the Aſmoneans till their deſtruction under Veſpaſian. It is a period of about two hundred years, taking in moſt part of the hiſtory of the Maccabees,

Maccabees, and all that of the New Teſtament: during which time the manners of the Jews were very different from what they were before.

CHAP. V.

The manners of the Jews of later times.

THESE later Jews were mingled with many nations. There were ſome of them ſettled *in every country under heaven*, as the Scripture ſays. Many came to dwell in Judea, or at leaſt made ſome journeys of devotion thither to ſacrifice in the only temple where it was lawful to do ſo. Beſides there were always from time to time ſome Gentiles who were made converts. Thus the Jews were, properly ſpeaking, no longer a people by themſelves, uſing the ſame language and cuſtoms, for many others began to unite under the ſame religion. The inhabitants of the Holy land conſiſted of different nations, as Idumeans, and other Arabians, Egyptians, Syrians, and Greeks. Acts ii. 5.

All the Jews ſtill looked upon themſelves as brethren, and aſſiſted each other in whatever part of the world they were diſperſed. They exerciſed hoſpitality towards ſuch as travelled

travelled, and relieved the poor in all provinces, but eſpecially in Judea. As they that were at a diſtance could not pay their tenths and firſt fruits in kind, nor come to the temple to make their offerings upon all feſtivals, they turned all theſe dues into money, and theſe contributions all together made up a conſiderable ſum; which each province ſent annually to Jeruſalem for the expence of ſacrifices and maintaining the prieſts and poor. This is the Jewiſh gold that Tully ſpeaks of.

Joſeph. Ant. xiv. 12.

Pro Flacco.

Theſe collections continued many years after the deſtruction of the temple. The chief of the nation ſent out ſenators at certain times, who commonly reſided near him, and were called *Apoſtles*, that is to ſay, Envoys. They went through the provinces to viſit the ſynagogues, and had authority over ſuch as preſided there and over the elders and miniſters, and at the ſame time carried back the collections to the patriarch. But the Chriſtian emperors forbad the continuance of it. The patriarchs came to this dignity by ſucceſſion: ſo that they were often infants. But before Jeruſalem was deſtroyed, ſome of the heads of their nation reſided in every province, who were called in Greek *Ethnarchs*, and judged them

Epiph. hær. xxx. n. 4, 7, 11.

Lib. iv. Cod. de Judæis.

Hier. in Iſaiah iii. 4.

them by their own law. Thoſe of Egypt are famous amongſt others.

In Judea the Jews were governed, as before, by a council of ſeventy one elders, which they called Sanhedrim, from a Greek word corrupted; and theſe are *the elders of the people* mentioned in the Goſpel. In every ſynagogue there was a *head* or *ruler* of it, as we ſee in the New Teſtament. There were prieſts or elders, and deacons or ſervants, named *Hazanin*, to take care of the ſynagogue and preſent the book to the doctor who inſtructed them. There were alſo twenty three judges in each city, as has been ſaid before. For it is to this time chiefly, that all which the Talmud ſays, concerning the form of judgments and the execution of juſtice, muſt be referred.

Epiph. hær. xxx. n. 1.

Luke xxii. 66, &c.

Luke viii. 41.

Cod. Sang. Maccoth.

The Jews of Judea always applied themſelves to tillage, breeding of cattle, and all kinds of huſbandry. There are ſome medals ſtill remaining, as old as the times of the Maccabees, upon which are to be ſeen ears of corn and meaſures, to ſhew the fertility of the country and the honour in which they held agriculture. Thus the Apocrypha deſcribes to us the proſperity of Simon's government: *Then did they till their ground in peace, and the earth gave her increaſe, and the trees of the field*

Valeſ. in Euſeb. vii. 10. Pallad. Vita Chryſoſt.

1 Macc. xiv. 8, &c.

their fruit; the antient men ſat all in the ſtreets conſulting together for the good of the country, and the young men put on glorious and warlike apparel. He provided victuals for the cities, and ſent them in all manner of munition, ſo that his honourable name was renowned unto the end of the world. He made peace in the land, and Iſrael rejoiced with great joy. For every man ſat under his vine and his fig-tree, and there was none to diſquiet them. And the author of Eccleſiaſticus has not omitted taking notice of this duty, *Hate not laborious work, neither huſbandry*, ſays he, *which the Moſt High has ordained.*

Eccluſ vii. 15.

There are ſome remains of old cuſtoms in every nation; there were ſtill at that time huſbandmen of good families in Italy and Sicily, and there will always be hunters in Germany.

Moſt of the parables in the Goſpel are taken from a country-life. *The ſower, the good ſeed, the tares, the vineyard, the good tree, the bad tree, the ſtrayed ſheep, the good ſhepherd*, and all this often ſpoken in cities and in Jeruſalem itſelf. Indeed, many parables ſhew us that trading with money was common amongſt the Jews, and that there were bankers and uſurers by profeſſion. Many were publicans, that

that is, farmers of the tribute and revenues. But this was an office that drew upon them the public hatred. Joſeph the ſon of Tobit is a notorious example, who got all the tribute of Syria and Phœnicia awarded to him under Ptolemy Epiphanes, and acquired immenſe riches by it. Joſeph. Ant. xii. 4.

If there were bankers and tax-gatherers amongſt the Jews, there is more reaſon to think there were wholeſale and retail merchants. Both which are mentioned by the author of Eccleſiaſticus, where he ſays he looked upon them as dangerous trades: *A merchant can hardly keep himſelf from doing wrong, and a huckſter ſhall not be freed from ſin.* He goes to the ſource of the evil, and adds, *That the deſire of riches blindeth men and makes them fall into ſin*; and that *as a nail ſticks faſt between the joinings of the ſtones, ſo doth ſin ſtick cloſe betwixt buying and ſelling.* Thus did God call back his people to their antient cuſtoms, ſhewing them the powerful reaſons that induced their fathers not to trade. Ecclus xxvi. 29. Ib. xxvii. 2.

But they were not much better for his inſtructions; and ſince their utter reprobation they have always been departing farther and farther from the ſimple and natural way in which the Iſraelites lived. It is a long time

ſince

ſince the Jews had any lands or followed huſbandry; they live only by trade, and by the worſt ſort of it too. They are retailers, brokers, and uſurers: their whole ſubſtance conſiſts only in money and other moveables: few of them have habitations of their own in any city.

Many profeſs phyſick, and have done ſo ever ſince the time I am ſpeaking of. The author of Eccleſiaſticus ſhews it, who recommends the uſe of this art and the compoſition of medicines. There is mention made in the Goſpel of a woman who had ſpent all that ſhe had upon phyſicians. What the forementioned author ſays afterwards of the great leiſure required for the ſtudy of wiſdom, ſeems to prove that the ſcribes or doctors made it their whole employment: but he ſhews at the ſame time the neceſſity of handicrafts, and there were then many amongſt the Jews. The apoſtles, Joſeph, and Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, are undeniable examples of it; and, what is moſt remarkable, St. Paul, though brought up to letters, was maſter likewiſe of a trade. The Jews relate the ſame of their moſt celebrated rabbins.

Ecclus xxxviii.

Luke viii. 43.

Ecclus xxxviii. 24.

Ib. 27, &c.

Talmud.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Their ſects and ſuperſtitions.

THE difference of ſects began at that time: under Jonathan the ſon of Mattathias there were already Phariſees, Sadducees, and Eſſenes. The Phariſees joined the traditions of the fathers to the text of the law, which were preſerved without writing: and though the doctrine they maintained was good at the bottom, they mixed a great many ſuperſtitions with it. They believed in fate, moderated by free will, or rather by providence which guides it. The Sadducees imputed all to free will. They interpreted the Scripture literally, and pretended that it did not oblige them to believe a reſurrection, or the immortality of the ſoul, or that there were angels or ſpirits. Thus they ſerved God only for a temporal reward, and gave themſelves up much to ſenſual pleaſures. They had little agreement amongſt themſelves, and but ſmall authority with the people. Their number was not great; but they were the chief of the nation, and even many of them prieſts. The common people were more attached to

Joſeph. Ant. xiii. 9. xviii. 2.

Acts xxiii. 8.

the Phariſees, who kept up an outward ſhew of great piety. Queen Alexandra gave them conſiderable power in the minority of her ſons.

Joſeph. Bell. i. 4.

The ſect of the Eſſenes was the moſt ſingular; they avoided living in great towns, their goods were in common, and their diet very plain. They ſpent a great deal of time in prayer and meditating upon the law. Their manner of life was very like that of the prophets and Rechabites. Some of them too obſerved a perfect continence, leading a life altogether contemplative, and in ſuch purity that many of the fathers have taken them for Chriſtians.

Ibid. ii. 7.

The Phariſees lived in the midſt of the world, in great amity with one another, leading a plain and outwardly ſtrict life: but moſt of them were intereſted, ambitious, and covetous. They valued themſelves on a great exactneſs in the outward performance of the law. They gave tithes not only of large fruits, but of the ſmalleſt herbs, as cummin, mint, and millet. They took great care to waſh themſelves, to purify their cups, their plate, and all their furniture. They kept the ſabbath ſo ſcrupulouſly that they made it a crime in our Saviour to moiſten a bit of clay at

Matth. xxiii. 23. Mark vii. 2.

John ix. 6.

at the end of his finger, and in his diſciples to pluck ſome ears of corn to eat as they paſſed along. Matth. xii. 2. They faſted often, many of them twice a weak, *i. e.* on Mondays and Thurſdays. Luke xviii. 12. They affected wearing their phylacteries and borders of their garments much larger than ordinary. Matth. xxiii. 5. The phylacteries are ſcraps of writing containing ſome paſſages of the law, faſtened upon their forehead and left arm, in obedience to the command of having the law of God always before their eyes, or in their hands. Deut. vi. 8. The fringes were of different colours, and they were ordered to wear them on the borders of their garments, that they might look upon them and remember the commandments of God. Num. xv. 38. The Jews even to this day wear theſe outward marks of religion, when they go to the ſynagogue; but upon working days only: for upon the ſabbath and feaſt-days they pretend they have no occaſion for theſe remembrancers. Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. iv.

The Phariſees gave alms in public, and made their faces yellow to look like great faſters. Matth. vi. 2, 5, 16. For an unclean perſon to touch them was reckoned the higheſt affront: and ſuch they eſteemed not only the gentiles and public ſinners but all that were of any odious profeſſion. In ſhort, moſt of them were

devout only out of intereſt; they miſled ignorant people by their ſpecious diſcourſes, and the women even ſtripped themſelves of whatever was valuable, to enrich them; and, under pretence that they were the people of God with whom the law was depoſited, they deſpiſed the Greeks and Romans, and all the nations upon earth.

We ſtill ſee in the books of the Jews theſe traditions, of which the Phariſees made ſo great a myſtery from time to time, and which were written about a hundred years after the reſurrection of Chriſt. It is hardly poſſible for a Chriſtian to conceive the frivolous queſtions with which theſe books are filled: as, Whether it be lawful on the ſabbath day to get upon an aſs to take it to the water, or whether it muſt be led by the halter: Whether one may walk over new ſown land, becauſe one runs a hazard of taking up ſome grains with the foot, and conſequently of ſowing them: Whether it be permitted on that day to write as many letters of the alphabet as will make ſenſe: If it be lawful to eat an egg laid on the ſabbath, the ſame day: About purifying the old leaven before the Paſſover; Whether they muſt begin again to purify a houſe, if they ſhould ſee a mouſe running croſs it with

Buxtorf. Synag. cap. xi.

with a crumb of bread; If it be lawful to keep paſted paper, or any plaiſter that has flour in it; If it be lawful to eat what has been dreſſed with the coals that remain after the old leaven is burnt: And a million of other ſuch caſes of conſcience, with which the Talmud and it's commentaries are ſtuffed.

Thus the Jews forgot the greatneſs and majeſty of the law of God, applying themſelves to mean and trifling things; and were now ſtupid and ignorant in compariſon of the Greeks, who reaſoned upon more uſeful and elevated ſubjects in their ſchools, and who, at leaſt, were polite and agreeable, if not virtuous.

Not but there were always ſome Jews more curious than the reſt, who took pains to ſpeak Greek correctly, read Greek books, and applied to their ſtudies, as grammar, rhetorick, and philoſophy. Such a one was Ariſtobulus, a peripatetick philoſopher, preceptor to Ptolemy Philometor; and ſuch were Eupolemus, Demetrius, and the two Philo's. Some of them wrote hiſtories in Greek, and after the Greek manner; as Jaſon of Cyrene; and the author of the ſecond book of Maccabees, who has abridged his works; and Joſephus the celebrated hiſtorian. 2 Macc. ii. 23.

Moſt of the Jews that ſtudied Greek lived at Alexandria. Others were content to ſpeak Greek ſo as to be underſtood, that is, badly, and always retaining the turn of their native language: and it is in this barbarous Greek that the tranſlations of the Old Teſtament, and the original of the New are written. The apoſtles and evangeliſts thought it ſufficient to write in a clear conciſe manner, deſpiſing all ornaments of language, and making uſe of that which was moſt eaſy to be underſtood by the commonalty of their own nation: ſo that, to underſtand their Greek perfectly, one muſt be acquainted with Hebrew and Syriack.

The Jews of theſe later times employed themſelves much in reading their law, and the holy Scriptures in general. They were not ſatisfied with expounding them according to the letter; they found out ſeveral ſenſes in them, expreſſed by allegories and divers metaphors: we ſee it not only in the New Teſtament, and the writings of the moſt antient fathers in controverſy with them, but by the books of Philo, the Talmud, and oldeſt Hebrew commentators upon the law, which they call *great Geneſis*, *great Exodus*, and ſo on. They held theſe figurative ſenſes by tradition from their fathers,

Juſtin. Dial. cum Tryph.

Bereſhith Rabba, &c.

But to ſay all at once, the manners of the Jews in thoſe times were exceſſively corrupt. They were ridiculouſly proud of being deſcended from Abraham, and puffed up with the promiſes of the Meſſiah's kingdom, which they knew to be near, and imagined would abound with victories and all manner of temporal proſperity. They were ſelfiſh, avaricious and ſordid, eſpecially the Phariſees, who were in general great hypocrites: they were wavering and unfaithful, always ripe for ſedition and revolt, under a pretence of caſting off the yoke of the Gentiles. In ſhort, they were violent and cruel, as appears by what they made our Saviour and his apoſtles undergo, and the unexampled injuries they did one another, both in the time of the civil war, and the laſt ſiege of Jeruſalem.

CHAP. VII.

The true Iſraelites.

HOWEVER, it was amongſt theſe people that the tradition of virtue was preſerved, as well as that of doctrine and religion. In this laſt time they had ſtill rare examples of holineſs, Zacharias and Elizabeth his wife, Joſeph, old Simeon, Anna the

propheteſs, Nathanael, Gamaliel the great doctor, and many others taken notice of in the hiſtory of the New Teſtament. All theſe holy perſons, and the ſpiritual Jews in general, that were circumciſed in heart, as well as body, were children of Abraham, more by imitation of his faith, than by birth. They firmly believed the prophecies and promiſes of God, they waited with patience for the redemption of Iſrael and the reign of the Meſſiah, which they vehemently wiſhed for: but they plainly ſaw they were not to confine their hopes to this life, and believed the reſurrection, and the kingdom of heaven. Thus the grace of God being ſuperadded to ſuch holy diſpoſitions, it was eaſy to make perfect Chriſtians of theſe true Iſraelites.

ERRATA.

Pag.	line.	
51	ult.	*luiſant* read *luiſans*
72	15 19	*et paſſim for* ate *read* eat
102	10	*note after* law *add* was
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118	*ult.*	exemples *read* examples
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FINIS.